

Thursday June 13 1996

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The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

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Is race hate sweeping America's deep South?

Burning churches

G2 with European weather



Derek Malcolm reviews Beautiful Thing

Love in a grim climate

G2 pages 8/9



OnLine

Software under suspicion

G2 pages 10/13



Residents of the Yamal peninsula, which juts into the Arctic ocean, vote early in the Russian presidential elections as it takes a day by helicopter to reach the nearest polling station

Major orders abuse inquiry

Michael White and David Brindley

MINISTERS will today act to try to heal the running sore of sexual abuse in Britain's children's homes, ordering a full judicial inquiry into one of the worst scandals and a wide-ranging review of others.

John Major will unveil the twin-track approach to what has become a damaging political issue after the Cabinet meets this morning to endorse the plans, drawn up hastily by the Health and Welsh Secretaries, Stephen Dorrell and William Hague.

The Prime Minister will also signal restrictions on the free movement of convicted paedophiles and the jobs they are at liberty to take.

Scotland Yard already has 4,500 abusers' names on its books, but MPs have been told that systematic repeat offences are common. A recent survey of 232 abusers found they had been responsible for 55,000 offences against 16,400 children. Conservative MP Anthony Coombes told the Commons yesterday.

Ministers are expected to bow to sustained pressure for a judicial inquiry into abuse over the past 30 years in the homes in North Wales. The decision will break the deadlock over the suppression of the Jillings report on abuse in homes in Clwyd.

Mr Major, who was yesterday said to have "read the riot act" to officials over the failure of various Whitehall departments to co-ordinate

effective action, is expected to make his initial statement at question time today — and to amplify this when he addresses the Welsh Tory conference tomorrow.

In a second move, ministers are expected to call for a less formal, but more speedy, review of the lessons to be learned from scandals in other homes throughout Britain.

Mr Hague has been under intense pressure to intervene in North Wales. Leaked versions of the Jillings report — which remains unpublished because of libel fears — have linked 12 subsequent deaths of former children's home residents to abuse they may have experienced in care. Four men have been convicted of abuse.

The focus of attention has recently shifted to Cheshire, where up to 300 children may have been abused over the past 30 years and six care workers have been jailed, with further cases pending.

These continuing cases and police inquiries will make the planned review tricky.

Roger Singleton, director of the children's charity Barnardo's, said yesterday he was not sure that a further inquiry would do anything to improve the safety of children in residential care.

Mr Singleton said on BBC Radio 4: "We know the nature of the problem; it really is a matter of getting on and doing it."

Alan Milburn, shadow health minister, said: "Labour will support a national inquiry into abuse in

Clarke deepens Euro rift with attack on right

Chancellor banks on steady growth in pre-election strategy

Larry Elliott Economics Editor

CHANCELLOR Kenneth Clarke threw down the gauntlet to the Tory right last night when he used his biggest set-piece speech of the year to champion Britain's membership of Europe and rule out a tax-cutting bonanza in the last Budget before the general election.

Mr Clarke risked deepening the Government's rift over Europe with an attack on those in his party flirting with the idea of withdrawing from the European Union. Speaking at the Lord Mayor's Mansion House banquet, Mr Clarke warned that "choosing voluntary exile from the world's largest market place would have very serious consequences, both economic and political".

The Chancellor dropped a clear hint that the recession in Britain's key European markets would next month force him to revise down his 3 per cent growth forecast for this year, but stressed that the Government's pre-election strategy would be based on steady growth rather than a populist attempt to stoke up the economy.

Seizing the first opportunity to hit back at the 74 Euro-sceptics who backed Bill Cash's token referendum bill, Mr Clarke said: "We need to retain a leading and influential position in the world's most powerful single market, the European Union, in order to take full advantage of our opportunities."

The Chancellor added that Britain's European base was

an asset, helping to attract inward investment and cementing the City's role as a global financial centre.

Dismissing the idea that he could engineer a pre-election boom, Mr Clarke said: "The economy is not a pot noodle



"Voluntary exile from the world's biggest marketplace would have serious effects"

Kenneth Clarke Chancellor

said this goal — together with the Prime Minister's desire to abolish capital gains tax and inheritance tax — was contingent on robust growth and control of public spending.

"We can only make progress on tax when it is prudent and sensible to do so, as our budget deficit closes. We are not pursuing a 1980s version of Reaganomics — slash taxes and bang the deficit. In the naive belief that any tax cut will always generate additional revenue."

Reflecting his belief that the Government's main problem remains the need to restore public confidence in its handling of the economy after the ERM debacle, the Chancellor went on: "The real world doesn't work that way. Tax cuts that could not be afforded would inevitably have to be reversed. Nobody wants that. In any case, to think that the electorate could be bribed by premature tax cuts is an insult to the intelligence of the British people."

Mr Clarke said the economy was enjoying the longest period of sustained low inflation for 50 years and mortgage rates at their lowest since the mid-sixties. He predicted that the number of people out of work and claiming benefit — which fell by almost 15,000 last month — would drop below two million in 1997.

The Chancellor said the benign inflation outlook justified last week's cut in interest rates to 5.75 per cent, but said he would not hesitate to increase borrowing costs if his inflation target appeared to be in jeopardy.

He added: "The British economy will be in excellent shape when the Prime Minister decides to call an election... But that will be because this Government has got the fundamentals right, because we have got the recipe for economic success."

Governor's speech and Notebook, page 11

Scarborough not so fair for Bulgars

Martin Wainwright

THE Queen of the Yorkshire Coast was chewing its elegant nails with fury last night after Bulgaria's Euro 96 squad dismissed it as too remote and quiet and pulled out — oh, mortification — sunny Darlington.

Ping-pong, bracing cliff walks and the numerous atmosphere which inspired Bram Stoker to write Dracula have failed to keep the players at the Raven Hall hotel, a blackstone pile on top of the saw-toothed rocks of Ravenscar Point, Scarborough.

"It's just too quiet and we don't have so many facilities," said team captain and goalkeeper Borislav "Bobby" Mihailov — unconsciously echoing the age-old anthem of Bridlington, Scarborough's deadly rival down the coast.

"The players were far from happy and were becoming very bored."

Demands for a "sporting" repayment of some of the £25,000 stumped up by Scarborough council for Bulgaria's hotel bill and training will pursue the team to Darlington, where players are taking rooms at a country house hotel, vacated by Romania's squad which is due to move south. Mavis Don, leader of Scarborough's Labour group, said: "I think it would be a generous gesture, which would also show good



The Bulgarian team make their exit from Scarborough

sportsmanship, if they paid back some of the money our taxpayers have spent to bring them here."

The Bulgarians will examine the plea in the Redworth Hall Hotel, between Darlington and Stockton-on-Tees, a former pad of the aristocratic and sporting Surtees family and one of the most luxurious new hotels in the North. The leader of Darlington council, John Williams, said: "We also thought that Darlington was the best place for the Bulgarians, because of our excellent communications with Tyne-side, and we were at a loss to understand why they went to Scarborough in the first place."

The Queen of the Coast put

a brave face yesterday on the move — which follows unhelpful recent controversies over sewage, seal-clubbing and a proposed seagull cull (abandoned after a popular uprising). Although only 750 of an expected 5,000 Bulgarian fans have come to stay in the resort, tourism committee chairman Dave Thompson expressed confidence that the town's investment and publicity had "opened up a new market in Bulgaria".

Bulgarian officials also offered the hand of friendship last night, explaining their move as a matter more of cutting down on travel, than lack of excitement by the seaside.

Rival attractions

- Scarborough**
- Alan Ayckbourn premieres (London gets them second)
 - Sunny sands, seagulls, seals, Sea Life centre
 - Miniature WWII battle-ships in Peasholm Park
 - Site of the Great Holbeck Hall Hotel landslip
 - Jet-boat trip around the bay, followed by fresh crab
- Darlington**
- Superb road, rail and air routes in (and most importantly) out
 - Vestigial traces of the world's oldest railway (to Stockton)
 - Locomotive No 1 — famous engine which rode those tracks
 - The Quakers — Darlington FC
 - St Cuthbert's 12th century church
- Sofia**
- The view across the Balkans
 - Sunrise reflected from the nine metal cupolas of the National Museum
 - Roman bath converted into the chapel of St George
 - Strong pavement cafe coffee, while reminiscing about the misdeeds of Basil the Bulgar-Slayer and Krum, the 9th century national hero

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Sketch

Lottery ticket protest a loser



Simon Hoggart

HERE was a demonstration in the public gallery of the Commons yesterday, with bits of paper being showered into the chamber. I don't want to sound more like an old fart than usual; these protests must seem like a good idea at the time. However, I fear they are always counter-productive.

MPs look up for half a second, the demonstrators are hurried away by attendants, and the leaflets remain unread. It's a point of honour in the Commons that nobody should glance at them. I did see two Labour MPs, Diane Abbott and Keith Hill, sneak a look later, but they're new, and don't know the form.

Oddly enough this turned out to be a unique example of Unesco hooliganism. Most on both sides of the House were trying to persuade the Foreign Office Minister Sir Nicholas Cosmo Bonser (who has my favourite of all MPs' names, straight out of a Sherlock Holmes novel) to resign his post as UNesco ambassador.

MPs made the point that the bad old days, when Unesco was under the influence of various Third World tyrants, were over and that the organisation once again deserved our support.

Toby Jessel (C, Twickenham) made a contribution which was silly even by his own high standards. He spoke of a time when, he claimed, "Unesco was staffed by long-haired men, short-haired women, and people who wear sandals in the office".

At this point, on what appeared to be some inaudible cue, a group of short-haired women of the type described (one had glossy pink hair and

looked rather sweet, like a My Little Pony toy) stood up in the gallery, squealed, and threw the bits of paper down. These turned out to be lottery tickets. Why? What were they trying to say? Were they residents of Twickenham, objecting to Mr Jessel? Many of us do, mainly because he keeps claiming ludicrously that our privatised train service is an improvement, but we don't hurl lottery tickets at him. Either way, their cause, whatever it is, has not been advanced.

It's all very mysterious. I suggest that people should not waste their time on such futile activity and try to find more effective methods of protest. Recent experience in Northern Ireland suggests that good fashioned terrorism seems to work.

We followed with a statement on dentistry. Naturally it came from a Minister of the Crown, Gerry Malone, who was concerned about the capping grants and building bridges with dentists. Labour members were gnashing their teeth. They said he lacked wisdom and was not incisive. This was all very complicated, but the gist was that the Government claims to be protecting NHS dentists (which is like General Custer claiming to protect the Plains Buffalo) while Labour reckons they want to privatise the whole service.

Demented allegations flew across the chamber. "He claims," said Mr Malone of a Liberal, "that one patient has disappeared every eight working day seconds!" which sounded terrifying. We heard that the average dentist had been overpaid £18,800 by the NHS, and that this was being waived to tempt them back into the service.

I shall try this on my bank: "Unless you write off my overdraft, I shall refuse to step into your offices again!"

Dennis Skinner accused the Government of wanting to go back to a time in the 1930s, "when if you wanted a tooth out, you'd go to Tony Skinner, because he'd got a good pair of pliers."

Mr Malone replied that in the 1930s, a strike had meant that military dentists had been placed on standby, which must be even more frightening than facing the Skinner pliers.

"This is a battle for the soul of this province. I will dedicate my life as never before to overturning the dastardly deed that was done."

Rev Ian Paisley, DUP leader



George Mitchell is congratulated by Irish foreign minister Dick Spring after assuming chairmanship of the talks

"You are lying to the people of Ulster, but your lies are being caught on. We will certainly not be joining you to surrender Ulster."

Rev William McCrea, DUP MP

Unionist 'war' skirmishes

David Sharrock HEY'VE started a civil war between the Unionist parties; the battle lines have been drawn," warned a hardliner yesterday, still smarting from the midnight "sell-out of Ulster" at the all-party talks. Fear and loathing stalked the corridors of Castle Buildings yesterday, after George Mitchell was finally allowed to take his seat as chairman of the talks early yesterday morning. Fisticuffs was never far from breaking out between Unionists.

Within minutes, however, an Irish official reversed that. The talks would continue for as long as it took; the Dublin government's jet, waiting to whisk Mr Spring, the foreign minister, to the United States, cut its engines. The main action was taking place between the Irish and British governments and the Ulster Unionists as they slaved over redrafts of position papers, straining language in the search for accommodation and ambiguity. Mr Mitchell could only wait and marvel at "the maestros of obstruction".

He met the Ulster Unionists to reassure them: "Let me tell you one thing on the head, I'm not an Irish American Catholic, I'm a Lebanese Maronite." Deputy leader John Taylor replied: "That's great. I have a house in North Cyprus and my solicitor's a Maronite." Bob McCartney MP and the Rev Ian Paisley were less impressed. Asked how anybody could object to a man with such impeccable international credentials, Ian Paisley Jr commented: "Yes, but so has Mickey Mouse."

At 27 minutes past midnight, Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, told the delegates that Mr Mitchell would now be assuming the chairmanship. There were cries of "30 pieces of silver" and "the people of East Belfast will be waiting for you" directed at the Ulster Unionist team. Sir Patrick, according to a senior British official, was called "seum" by one delegate and Mr Mitchell, who was nearly blown away by Mr Trimble's physical blocking of the path of another trying to occupy Mr Mitchell's chair. When the former US senator finally walked in there was a standing ovation from everybody except the Ulster Unionists and the remaining members of the Democratic Unionist Party. Mr Paisley thundered at him: "We don't accept you, we object in the strongest possible terms."

A few hours sleep did nothing to sweeten tempers. Once talks resumed yesterday, Mr Castle Buildings bickering. Mr Paisley recommitted himself to the struggle. "This is a battle for the soul of this province. I will dedicate my life as never before to overturning the dastardly deed that was done." Mr Trimble expressed the hope that his colleague would soon calm down and join him in the fight against the real enemies of Unionism. The next full plenary session will be held next Wednesday, before which the Ulster Unionists hope to whittle down Mr Mitchell's "over-arching" role. Irish ministers said this would not be allowed to happen. The next round will be played out tomorrow at the first meeting of the Northern Ireland Forum. Sinn Fein has refused to take its 17 seats, but the SDLP will be there, even if they believe the real action will remain at Stormont.

Leader comment, page 8

Shoats, coats and floats: how to double the dough

Ian King

AG trade tycoon who started out selling shaggy coats to hippies in London's Portobello Road will see his estimated £85 million fortune more than double when Monsoon, the high street fashion chain he founded, floats on the stock market later this summer.

He subsequently sold fish fingers and faggots for Bird's Eye, before a round-the-world trip brought him to the island of Gozo, near Malta.

It was there that Mr Simon discovered the secret of a cross between a sheep and a goat, and found that a popular line among local knitters was to turn the creature's wool into Afghan-style coats. He immediately snapped up a large number of "shoat coats", and on his return to Britain, sold out at once.

Further trips to countries like India gave Mr Simon more ideas for ethnic look clothing, and enabled him to set up a chain of "shoat coats", and on his return to Britain, sold out at once.

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Since then Monsoon, which will be valued at around £250 million at flotation, has mushroomed and now operates almost 150 stores. Peter Simon, whose earlier business ventures include selling fish fingers and encyclopedias, opened his first Monsoon store in Knightsbridge in 1973, specialising in "ethnic look" clothes.

Further trips to countries like India gave Mr Simon more ideas for ethnic look clothing, and enabled him to set up a chain of "shoat coats", and on his return to Britain, sold out at once.

Relic of turbulent priest stirs saleroom commotion

Dan Glaister Arts Correspondent

THE 12th century reliquary chest that at one time held some of the remains of St Thomas à Becket could leave the country when it goes on auction at Sotheby's in London next month. The chest, a Limoges enamel reliquary chalice, goes on sale at an estimated price of about £1.5 million, although it could sell for as much as £2.3 million. It is feared that the high price will mean that British museums will not be able to afford the piece.

Prime Minister orders judicial inquiry into child abuse

continued from page 1

children's homes, but only if it leads to urgent action. But Brian Waller, a spokesman for Association of Directors of Social Services, said he believed public disquiet over events in Clwyd demanded a national review of child abuse cases. In a related move next week, Michael Howard, Home Secretary, will announce a "pseudophile register", based on the findings of the recent white paper, that would strengthen post-release supervision of such sex offenders to protect the public and help prevent re-offending.

The circumstances of his death are depicted in gruesome detail on one panel of the chalice. Becket is shown in the act of picking up a communion cup. From behind, a knight decapitates him with a

long sword while two other knights look on. Under export control rules the chalice could leave the country because it has only been in the UK since 1979, when it was bought by its current vendors, the British Rail Pensions Fund. The NACF, which gives grants towards purchase of works of art, has already been in contact with the Victoria & Albert Museum, one of the chalice's potential buyers. "We've offered a grant already to get the ball rolling and help the V & A make a bid for it," said Mr Barrie. "But I'm sure other museums are interested, and the price could go much higher than the estimate." The history of the chalice remains something of a mystery. It was probably made for Peterborough Abbey, now Peterborough Cathedral. Experts have come to this conclusion because its earliest known owners were accorded to one 18th century source, "a Popish family of old in St Neots". "If you are going to own a Thomas à Becket reliquary chalice, this is the one to have," said Mr Webb. "There have been no changes to it. It's all original."



The branch in Kensington High Street, London, of the successful Monsoon fashion chain

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First night

Woman works in mysterious ways

Lyn Gardner

The York Mystery Plays Theatre Royal, York

SO, as a good many of us have always known, God is a woman — in a purple trouser suit. Two minutes into John Doyle's production of the 1996 York Mystery Cycle, you wonder why the casting of local shopkeeper Ruth Ford has attracted such controversy. This woman was born to play God. She is magnificent in her ordinariness, a benign, still presence watching over her world and guiding its inhabitants like a celestial lollipop lady who makes quite sure that nobody comes to any harm provided they behave themselves.

the common people. The crowd which jeers Jesus as he crawls on his hands and knees is the same crowd which cannot bear to watch and weep pitifully as the nails go in.

Abraham is a blustering local. Joseph, staring blindly at Mary's ripening belly demanding to know "Who's been there?" is transformed a few minutes later into a proud protective father and husband.

Only the jack-booted Herod, a real star turn by John Hall, and his sinister henchmen, who slaughter the innocents amid swathes of red silk, are insidiously and insistently evil.

In the Middle Ages, performances of the cycle began at 4.30am and finished some time after midnight. Lochhead has selected and cut to whittle things down to under four hours. Inevitably there are some omissions. You have barely finished laughing at the joyously childlike staging of Noah (a lovely Ark with huge, badly-behaved, glove puppet giraffe, elephants and zebras peering out of the port-holes) than you are on to the Nativity and the arrival of the three kings — an Englishman, a Scotsman and a Welshman.

But this is a mere quibble about an event that is as much for the community as for the act of participation and the act of surrender on the part of performers and audience, as it is about theatre.

You can easily forgive the lack of polish amid the spectacle, the ironic comedy, the terrific music, and those tiny spellbinding moments such as a lone small boy singing in the Bleak Midwinter unaccompanied.

Liz Lochhead's adaptation, as cunning and bristly as a ratcatcher's glove, and Doyle's simple production keep holding a mirror up to

Iraq bars UN monitors from their nuclear weapons sites

Ian Black Diplomatic Editor

IN A NEW confrontation between Iraq and the West, Saddam Hussein was yesterday denying United Nations officials access to military sites, in defiance of resolutions ending the Gulf war. The United States and Britain condemned Baghdad at the UN after the first sign of

serious defiance since last month's oil-for-food deal. Iraq's deputy prime minister, Tariq Aziz, said they would not allow UN inspectors to enter sites vital to the country's sovereignty and security. One was reportedly connected with nuclear weapons and documentation. He confirmed Baghdad had denied a team of experts access to a Republican Guard facility yesterday.

The Guardian She gets his home, he gets her lover's home in a deal that may end pop couple's public feud

Gary Young on a bizarre deal

Bob and

A

Tory rebel agrees to



The public may rather than defend matter. Yet this Board assumes would all be say backbenchers a

JP 11/15/96

She gets his home, he gets her lover's home in a deal that may end pop couple's public feud

Gary Younge on a bizarre deal



Paula Yates and Bob Geldof leave court by separate exits yesterday after their who-lives-where agreement brought an end to three days of legal action

Bob and Paula call truce with house swap

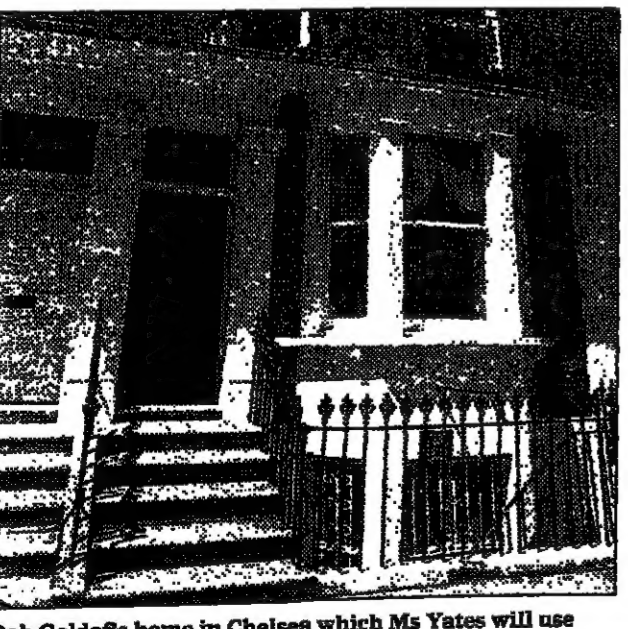
AFTER the wife swap, the house swap. A bizarre truce which may end public feuding between Paula Yates and her ex-husband, Bob Geldof, will allow her to live in his house — while he gets to live in the home of her boyfriend, pop star Michael Hutchence.

But scarcely had the ink dried on the deal before the couple were breaking their own rules. Amid raised voices Ms Yates was heard to say: "Nineteen years and you just wanted to see me out on the street." She then went on to describe one of Mr Geldof's friends as a "slapper".

For a consummate self-publicist like Ms Yates, 36, who in his told the world she was not potty trained until she was five, anorexic at eight and sexually intimate with an Argentinian at 12, the devil was always going to be in the detail.

It was suggested last night that the agreement was about accommodation rather than ownership of the Geldof house, giving Ms Yates somewhere to stay while she is pregnant. The couple may return to court later this year to hammer out a final settlement.

After the two brief private hearings yesterday afternoon the couple posed for photographers on the steps of the Law Courts before driven away. This time in separate taxis.



Bob Geldof's home in Chelsea which Ms Yates will use



Hutchence's home in Cheyne Walk which Geldof will use

Tory rebel agrees to spurn Goldsmith cash after whips act

Michael White, Stephen Bates and Rebecca Smithers

THE Prime Minister last night cracked the disciplinary whip over Tory MP Bill Cash by ordering him not to accept any more cash from billionaire financier Sir James Goldsmith, in what was seen as Mr Major's fury over financial links between Sir James and Mr Cash's Eurosceptic think-tank.

Mr Cash was summoned to a meeting with the Tory chief whip, Alastair Goodlad, and told, "in no uncertain terms", according to one source,

either to resign as chairman of the think-tank, the European Foundation, or to stop taking money from Sir James at least until the next general election.

The Prime Minister's intervention was disclosed by sources at Westminster after Mr Cash issued a brief statement setting out the reasons for the decision to stop taking money from Sir James, but failing to mention his summons to see Mr Goodlad.

The public may prefer their taxes to be spent on the NHS rather than defence, but we don't have much say in the matter. Yet this attack on the National Lottery Charities Board assumes that if we had a say in the matter we would all be saying the same things as a few nutty backbenchers and the seek-and-destroy tabloids.

Suzanne Moore G2 page 7

Clinton fails to dampen black anger

Martin Walker in Greeleyville

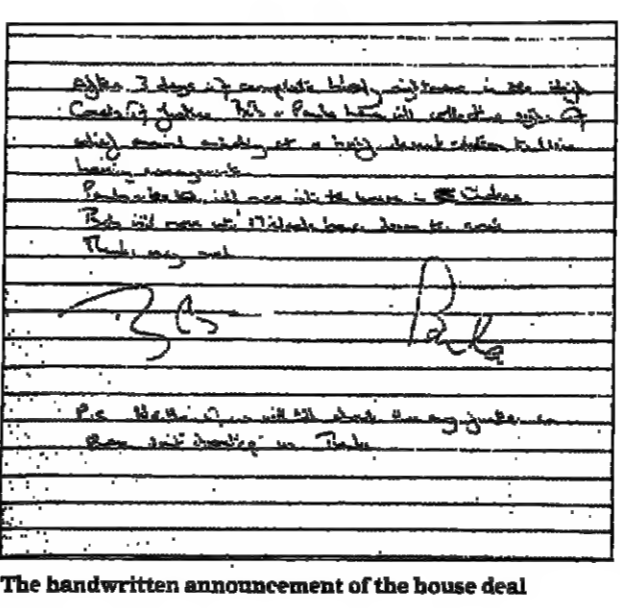
PRESIDENT Clinton yesterday rejected the pleas of angry black leaders that he blame the latest spate of church burnings across the South on the "coded racist messages" of the Republicans, and appealed to all Americans to unite against extremists.

ings, reminiscent of the worst days of the civil rights struggles. Last Saturday, after another burning of one of the oldest black chapels in the country, Mr Clinton devoted his weekly radio address to the matter, made another speech during a campaign swing through California, and decided to highlight it once more by flying to South Carolina yesterday.

"We must keep this out of politics," he said, speaking in the car park of the new and not-quite finished Mount Zion church in Greeleyville, South Carolina, yesterday. It is just down the road from the charred ruins of the old church burned by white supremacists a year ago.

It became another occasion for Mr Clinton to show his mastery of the role of Em-path-in-Chief, his almost sacerdotal skill in officiating at great national events. He learned its power at the memorial ceremony for the victims of the Oklahoma City bombing, when he acted as the focus for the country's grief and saw his reward in the opinion polls.

Mr Clinton was a most persuasive healer yesterday. He turned from the righteous anger at the burning of the church, to the way the black congregation had rebuilt it



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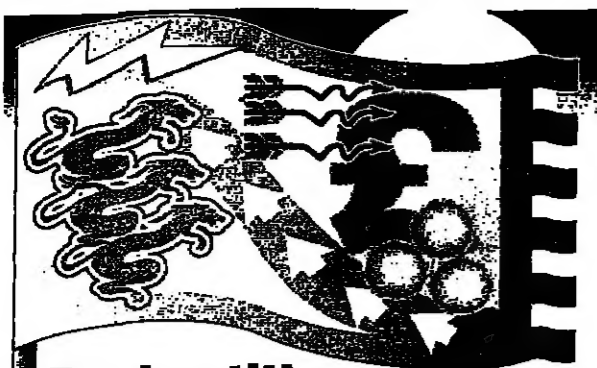
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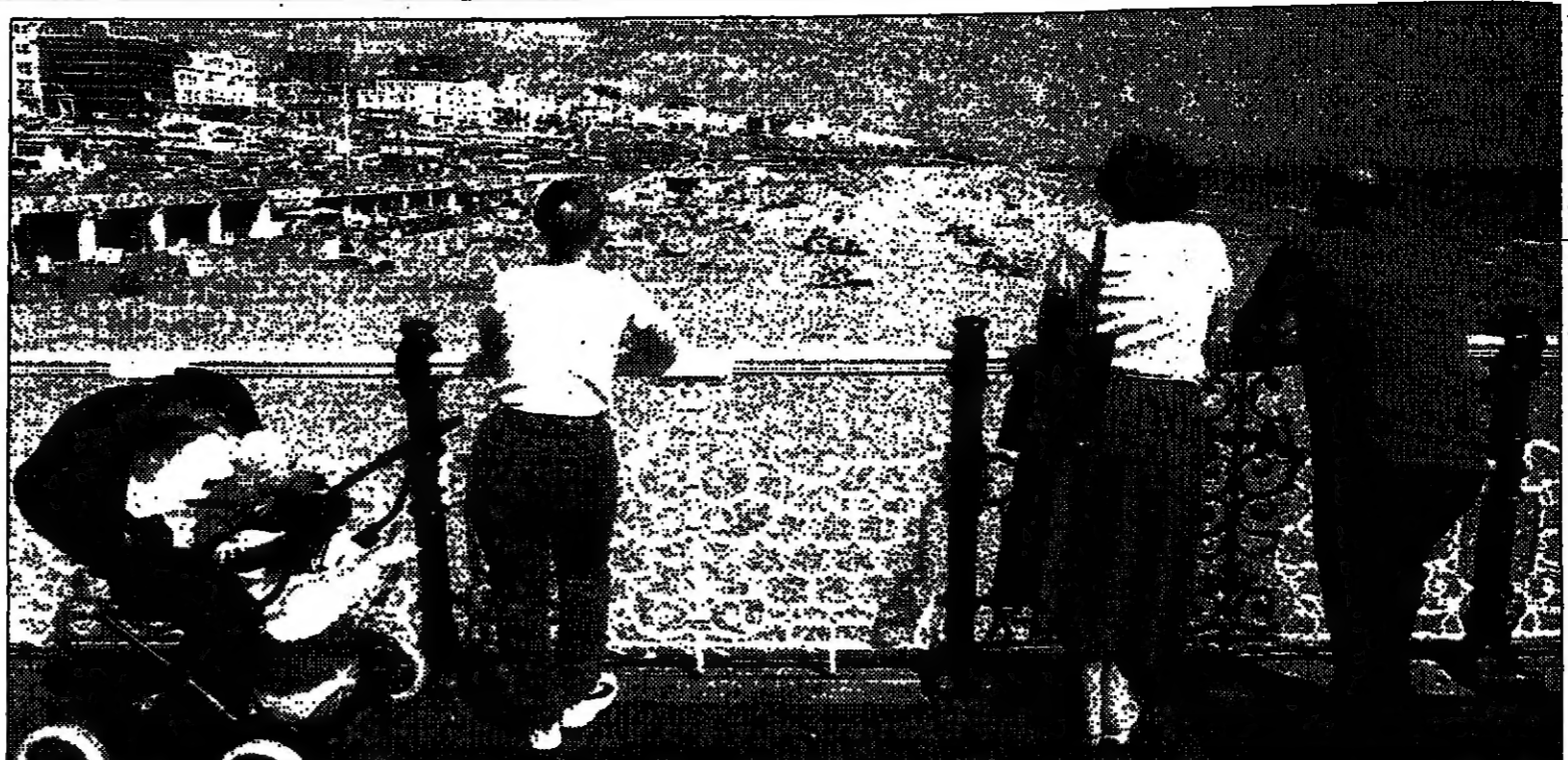
Buying titles

Title	Earldom	Bought	Amount	Purchaser
Earl	Earldom of Arun	Dec 1994	£467,500	English businessman
Lord	Manor of Ruchlaw, Scotland	Feb 1990	£39,000	Anonymous Canadian
Lord	Manor of Stratford-on-Avon	Apr 1988	£87,000	Donald Wilson, art expert
Lord	Manor of Hensley-in-Arden	July 1980	£85,000	Joseph A Hardy, banker, 'Topin'
Lord	Field of Birles	1989	£66,000	Tim Hudson, Ian Botham's former manager
Lord	Manor of Hurlingham	June 1992	£50,000	Anonymous English family

Brighton reacts coolly towards lord of the ring

Vivek Chaudhary in boxer's new manor

THE self-professed lord of the ring can now proclaim to be lord of another domain — Brighton. Former world boxing champion, Chris Eubank, who has strived hard to cultivate an aristocratic image, complete with blue-blooded lisp, has gone one better, paying £45,000 at an auction for the title of Lord of the Manor of Brighton. Eubank, often seen wearing jodhpurs, a monocle and tailor-made suits, gained his latest title during an auction at Founders



Pier group... Brighton sea front, part of the domain now being lorded over by former world boxing champion, Chris Eubank. PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Hall, in the City of London, where up to 30 titles were on sale last week. News of Eubank's purchase was only confirmed yesterday. Eubank joins a line of aristocratic predecessors, some also from good fighting stock. Earl Goodwin first held the title and his father was King Harold, who fought the Normans at the Battle of Hastings. The title fell into the hands of King Henry VIII, also known to like a spot of bother, and he gave it to his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves.

Eubank was told about the sale of the title, which allows him to call himself Lord of Brighton, by Jackie Airstop, its former owner, after she heard he lived in Hove, near Brighton, East Sussex. She won the title in a newspaper competition eight years ago. Eubank can use the title on his passport, stationary and chequebook but he will not be able to go a few rounds in the House of Lords. A manorial lordship does not allow the owner to sit in the House.

Yesterday afternoon, as Eubank's subjects basked in glorious sunshine along Brighton sea front, many could have been tried for treason as they reflected on the new lord of the manor. "More like lord of the tospots," said Tonia Williams, aged 28. "You can always hear him before you see him. He's not very popular around here. He's too arrogant and thinks he owns the world. But at least he hasn't any rights as lord." Emily Doe, aged 80, said: "He lives the life of a lord

anyhow and behaves as if he's an aristocrat. I think it's all a load of rubbish and Eubank is having a laugh." Corrina Hawks, aged 19, said: "I can't stand the bloke. Just because he's got money he thinks he can buy what he wants and that's not fair. It should be up to the people of Brighton to decide who they want as their lord." Zeki Hassan protested that boxers should only acquire titles in the way they know how — fight for them. "There's no fun in Eubank

buying the title. I would rather have seen him go into the ring and knock someone out for it. Perhaps he could have fought another lord!" Two 90-year-old women at the Brighton Pavilion had never heard of Eubank. When told he had just bought the title of the Lord of Brighton one replied: "Not in my world, he's not a lord. I used to know a lord once and he would never have punched anyone for money. A lord should only fight for honour."

Teachers will have to grasp 3 Rs

Shephard orders shake-up as skills audit damns Britain

Donald MacLeod
Education Correspondent

POWERS to ensure teachers are trained to deliver the three Rs are to be taken by the Government in an attempt to combat Britain's falling competitiveness, Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, said yesterday. The First Skills Audit to be published today would show Britain lagging in literacy and numeracy, she told a Con-

federation of British Industry conference. "It is absolutely essential that this is addressed, to enable our young people, and indeed adults too, to make their way in the increasingly demanding jobs market." The audit, ordered by Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, compares skill levels in Britain with Germany, France, the United States and Singapore. Mrs Shephard took pre-emptive action yesterday, announcing a flurry of measures to raise standards.

Tighter control over teacher training colleges and university departments — a long-standing target of the Conservative right — is designed to counter criticism in the party that she is ineffectual. David Blunkett, Labour's education spokesman, said the training review should go further and reintroduce a probationary year for new teachers. Mrs Shephard was stealing Labour initiatives such as inspection of authorities and target setting. Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers, said the move would be supported in principle by most

teachers. "These days the great majority of teachers are very different from the trendy Wendy woolly jumper people — they exist, but they are in a small minority." "We have been asking for the last 20 or 25 years that teacher training should do more to prepare teachers for the classroom." "The trouble is that the Government has been procrastinating, and listening to advisers, inspectors and administrators instead of teachers." An education bill in the autumn will allow schools to select up to half their intake and convert to grammar schools, a cause dear to the Prime Minister. It will also

deal with discipline and give the Office for Standards in Education powers to inspect local authorities. The Teacher Training Agency has been asking for courses to be tightened although 20 out of 25 Ofsted reports on institutions in England published this month showed training to be sound or better. The University Council for the Education of Teachers said changes to primary training were only due to come fully into effect in September. "We must be the most reformed area in creation," said Mary Russell, the council's secretary. Its main worry was a looming shortage of secondary teachers.

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Sue McGorrigan (right), now back with the BBC and earning £10,000 more than she did in the classroom. PHOTOGRAPH: JOAN RUSSELL

'Knee-jerk changes will make pupils suffer'

Martin Wainwright hears a radio reporter tell why she quit after a foray into education

SUE McGorrigan would almost certainly be a dream teacher for Gillian Shephard. The graduate and well-paid radio reporter took a pay cut to train for primary teaching at an inner city school three years ago. But Ms McGorrigan said of the Education Secretary's raft of changes for teacher training: "It looks alarmingly like kneejerk, simple-solution stuff. A programme which will make teaching look more organised and disciplined, but almost certainly at the children's expense." Ms McGorrigan, 31, remem-

bers more good than bad about her year at Goldsmith's College in London, doing a post-graduate certificate in education on top of her politics and German degree from Bradford university. She wanted to follow the example of an inspirational teacher at her primary school in the Cumberland town of Ulverston, and opted out of a promising career with BBC regional radio in the North. "The course was very well organised, especially in its mixture of educational theory with a gradual introduction of practice.

"We visited schools as observers first and were never thrown in at the deep end. The theory was particularly important. I wanted to be able to justify to myself everything I did in the classroom and by the end of the year, I could. When I went to work at Potterton primary school in Leeds, I was clear about what I was doing and why. If you ask all too many teachers why they are doing something, they say, because that's the way I do it." The downside of Goldsmith's was a failure to answer similar 'whys' in some of the lectures, which could tend towards the woolly, generalised and occasionally patronising. Mrs Shephard's emphasis on front-of-

class teaching gives Ms McGorrigan her greatest unease. She said: "Of course it's useful sometimes, but the people who would benefit most from insistence on doing it all the time would be mediocre teachers (of whom there's no shortage). "In the eyes of the public, it looks wonderfully organised, but actually it's a lot easier for the teacher to stand at the front and tell the kids what to do, see the bright ones do it and then blame the others who get left behind. "Working in groups is much harder, because you have to get the children on your side, understanding what they are doing. When you succeed, much more

effective teaching goes on. "One of the most rewarding examples I had of putting my training into practice was using a class disco for maths — the kids worked out how many chicken legs they needed and so on. To an outsider it would have looked like chaos, but some very good maths went home that day." Ms McGorrigan is now back with the BBC, promoted and earning £10,000 more than she did in the classroom. Not that she wanted to leave teaching. "Good training and enthusiasm founded on a clash with the head at Potterton, which failed an Ofsted inspection this spring, a year after Ms McGorrigan left.

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Government agrees to let dentists keep £16,500 fee overpayments

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

DENTISTS will be let off a claimed overpayment of fees of £16,500 a head under a deal announced yesterday which will end a four-year dispute between the profession and the Government. Ministers are also offering £40,000 to try to attract den-

tists to areas of England with the worst shortages of NHS practitioners. The concessions were announced in the Commons by Gerald Malone, Health Minister, which he described as "an exciting and challenging new agenda for the profession and the NHS." As reported earlier this week, the deal reintroduces item-of-service fees for treat-

ing children in addition to capitation payments. This means children's care will take a larger slice of the dental budget. The package also proposes the pilot-testing of a purchaser-provider system for dentistry. The profession's agreement came after ministers decided to waive the claimed £16,500 overpayment, which was notched up through the com-

plex payment system over several years to 1993/94. Dentists have been refusing to pay back any money. The scheme to attract dentists to shortage areas follows a similar, successful initiative in Wales which has been offering grants of £25,000 or £30,000 to recruit practitioners. Joe Rich, chairman of the British Dental Association's general dental services

committee, said: "The dental care of children has been our top priority. Now we must progress to reform adult dentistry." Labour dismissed the deal as "pathetic". Henry McLeish, shadow health minister, said the Government was intent on promoting further privatisation of adult dentistry while retaining a residual service for children and people on benefits.

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The Guardian

Rabbiting o

TV get

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PETRO



Double act... News Bunny and Kenneth Kendall get together for cable station's first birthday. PHOTOGRAPH NIPPA MATTHEWS

Rabbiting on with a BBC veteran

'Friendly' Live TV gets round of applause from an old hand

Andrew Gull
Media Correspondent

KENNETH Kendall, the veteran BBC presenter, came out of retirement yesterday to read his first television news bulletin for 15 years — with a little help from News Bunny.

It was one of a series of stunts marking the first birthday of Mirror Group's Live TV, run by Kelvin

MacKenzie, former editor of the Sun.

Mirror Group has made a five-year, £30 million investment in the cable station which concentrates on a tabloid television mix of cheap soaps, glamour, horoscopes, sport and sex.

Headline-grabbing gimmicks included the invention of News Bunny, a life-size rabbit who interprets news bulletins with thumbs up and down gestures. Eva Bjertnes delivers the

weather forecast in her native Norwegian, ex-Page 3 model Gail McKenna presents the sports news, and Lunchbox Volleyball features all-male teams in Lycra shorts.

Live is based on the 24th floor of Canary Wharf, in Docklands, east London. It is available in 1.4 million homes with cable TV, and has audiences optimistically estimated at more than 50,000.

Mr MacKenzie said the next phase of its development was the establishment of a network of city TV stations. Local versions of Live

will launch in Liverpool in November and Edinburgh and Glasgow in December.

Other stations will open in 1997 in a £3 million expansion creating 200 jobs. Birmingham Live was launched eight months ago. "All we are is an electronic form of local media. It is not rocket science," said Mr MacKenzie.

Stalwarts of the BBC in 1955 — a single channel era — were invited to join in the day-long celebrations.

Mr Kendall, aged 71, said of Live TV: "The atmosphere is very friendly and relaxed. Perhaps it was a bit serious in our day."

Society told 'improve system' or risk losing right to regulate solicitors

Ombudsman lays down the law over complaints

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

THE Law Society must improve the way it handles complaints against solicitors or risk losing the right to regulate the profession, the Legal Service Ombudsman warned yesterday.

Michael Barnes, whose office oversees complaints handling by the society and the Bar Council, said the society's latest shake-up of its complaints system could be its last chance. "If further research in a few years' time shows that not much has changed, the pressure for a completely independent, one-stop complaints system is likely to become irresistible."

The warning follows the society's research showing two out of three complainants to the Solicitors Complaints

Bureau (SCB) were "very dissatisfied" with the outcome. This was "clear evidence something fundamental is wrong", said the ombudsman.

He added: "If there is no improvement in the level of dissatisfaction, I'm sure in two or three years' time, the Government is... going to take complaints handling away from the Law Society and set up an independent system with an ombudsman which solicitors almost certainly would still have to pay for."

A new Office for the Supervision of Solicitors, with more involvement of non-lawyers in overseeing complaints handling, and more emphasis on solicitors dealing with complaints in-house, will replace the much-criticised SCB from September.

Mr Barnes said the society needed to achieve a "culture change" on the part of solicitors, who tended to adopt a

legalistic and defensive stance with complaints.

If the new body was to satisfy more complainants than the old, it would have to be more "consumer-friendly" to overcome doubts about its impartiality. Solicitors would need to have effective in-house complaints procedures, which many did not, even though they were mandatory under Law Society rules.

He named four solicitors' firms which had refused to comply with his recommendation that they compensate clients for failing to provide an adequate service. He has no power to force them to pay.

He criticised barristers for living "a somewhat blinkered existence in a cloistered world of their own".

The new Bar complaints system, watered down to meet opposition from the criminal Bar, was "extremely disappointing". It differed from

recommendations by the Bar's review body in three important respects: barristers would be immune from complaints over conduct of court cases, as they were immune from lawsuits; compensation would only be payable for financial loss up to £2,000, not for distress and inconvenience; and the service had to fall "significantly" below what would be expected.

This raised the question whether the system was "worth having". He had concluded that they compensate clients for failing to provide an adequate service. He has no power to force them to pay.

The SCB said it was making efforts to change the culture of complaints handling. The new body "promises to recognise its duty to both solicitors and their clients and thus means enabling the profession to meet us halfway in delivering a better service."

CASE 1

THE solicitors who drew up Mrs V's will failed to get it witnessed properly, so it was invalid. Mrs V lost a £57,480 inheritance. The solicitors, Winters of Hull, denied liability when she tried to sue them. She was unable

to go ahead because her step-mother died more than 15 years after the will was drafted, the time limit for bringing such actions.

The SCB refused to investigate claiming it was a negligence issue for the courts.

The ombudsman recommended in 1994 that Winters pay Mrs V £59,809 compensation. It has still not paid.

CASE 2

MR M, a passenger on the Marchioness when it sank on the Thames, claimed compensation. Liability was admitted and an out-of-court offer made, on condition that if he rejected it and got less in court he would pay all costs.

In court, he got far less than anticipated, and lost most in costs. It turned out his barrister had not appeared in court in a contested damages claim before. The Bar Council said this did not amount to professional misconduct. It added she had advised him to accept the offer. His solicitors disagreed, and the ombudsman told the council to reconsider.

Subs to be stored until 2012

Discarded nuclear hulks await building of underground dump

David Fairhall

THE Royal Navy's discarded nuclear submarines will lie rusting in Rosyth and Devonport dockyards at least until 2012, MPs have been warned. By then, Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, says, it will be possible to bury their contaminated reactors in a permanent underground store. Giving evidence yesterday to the Commons defence com-

mittee, Mr Portillo was asked by the Liberal Democrat defence spokesman, Menzies Campbell, whose constituency, Fife North East, is near Rosyth, for reassurance that the nuclear hulks would not be "stacked up" in the Scottish dockyard indefinitely.

Mr Portillo said he understood local people's concern, but there were no plans to do anything with the decommissioned boats until the underground dump proposed by Nirex at Sellafield, in Cum-

bria, was ready. Until then they would remain afloat.

Six hulks are lying in the Rosyth dockyard basin — three former Polaris missile boats plus three hunter-killers — and four more hunter-killers are at Devonport, Plymouth.

When the nuclear-powered submarines are decommissioned, their uranium fuel rods are removed, allowing radioactivity in the reactor and its cooling system to decay — quite quickly for the first few years and then extremely slowly. Only this contaminated section needs to be stored underground, and the longer it is left before dis-

memberment begins, the lower the health risk to those doing the work.

The British nuclear dump referred to by Mr Portillo is for intermediate-level nuclear waste. An experimental "rock laboratory" will be excavated deep under the Cumbrian hills, and if it seems to be leakproof, planning permission will be sought to develop it as a permanent store. However Nirex, the company responsible for disposing of nuclear waste, is not so optimistic as Mr Portillo about how long this much-delayed project will take. The earliest completion date recently suggested is 2015.

PETROLEUM CONTROL COMMISSION

TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS TO MALAWI

The Petroleum Control Commission (PCC) of P.O Box 2827, Blantyre, Malawi wish to invite sealed TENDERS from eligible suppliers for the supply of white petroleum products - Mogas (Petrol), Automotive Gas Oil (Diesel) and Dual Purpose Kerosene (Jet A-1 and Paraffin) for 1996/97 as specified below:-

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF TENDERING

- This invitation is open to all Oil Companies currently operating in Malawi, Oil Suppliers and registered Oil Trading Firms.
- All Tenderers shall declare any association and/or affiliation with any companies or government entities in Malawi which are involved with the procurement, transportation or marketing of petroleum products.
- Tenders should be valid for 60 days starting from the date fixed for receiving tenders. No tenders may be withdrawn for any reason between the deadline for submission of tenders and the expiration of the period of tender validity.
- The Tender should specify the sources of all products to be supplied.
- The duration of the supply contract shall be 12 (twelve) months from the date of commencement.
- PCC does not undertake to award against this tender or to accept the lowest tender bid in any particular case. In addition, PCC reserves the right to award only part of the supply to any tender offered and will not assign any reason for the rejection of a tender.
- Tenderers are required to provide all necessary information about their companies, with such information including, but not being limited to:-
 - : Annual reports for 1994 and 1995 for public companies.
 - : Major activities and customers for the last two years.
 - : At least two first class international bank references.
- The original and two copies of the tenders, which should be in the English Language, should be addressed to the General Manager of the Petroleum Control Commission, at the following address:-
Petroleum Control Commission
5th Floor, Umoyo House
Victoria Avenue
P.O Box 2827
Blantyre
MALAWI
Telephone : 00 265 620 155
Telefax : 00 265 620 908
Telex : 44887 PETROL M1
 so as to reach him, not later than 16.00 hours Malawi time on 28th June, 1996
- The envelope addressed to the Petroleum Control Commission, should bear the name of the tendering company, the words "TENDER PETROLEUM PRODUCTS" and the words "DO NOT OPEN BEFORE 01.07.96." Tenders received after the deadline will be rejected and returned unopened to the Tenderers.
- All tender prices shall be quoted in United States Dollars per cubic metre on C.I.F and Ex-Tank basis, Beira, Nacala and Dar es Salaam Ports.

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- The tender is for the supply of products covering the period starting from September, 1996 and ending August, 1997, which are estimated as follows:-

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 a. changes in demand of the products in Malawi, and
 b. prices offered.

PRODUCTS QUANTITY

- As per specifications in the tender document.
- Tender documents may be obtained upon payment of a non-refundable deposit of United States Dollars 800.00 (Eight Hundred) from the General Manager, Petroleum Control Commission, P.O Box 2827, Blantyre, Malawi. All enquiries regarding the Tender Documents should be made in writing to the General Manager.
- Members of the public may attend the opening of the tenders in the Boardroom of Petroleum Control Commission, 6th Floor, Umoyo House, Victoria Avenue, Blantyre, on 01.07.96, 15.00 hours, Malawi time.

Dennis S.J Kambalame
 GENERAL MANAGER
 PETROLEUM CONTROL COMMISSION

PETROLEUM CONTROL COMMISSION

As Russians prepare to go to the polls on Sunday, a bomb on the Moscow metro has added to a worsening climate of insecurity in which the president, Boris Yeltsin, claims that an extremist Communist faction wants to start a civil war, while his rivals say the president is seeking to destabilise an election he cannot win



Election monthful... A strong man uses his teeth to pull a five-ton truck plastered with posters of presidential candidate Svyatoslav Fyodorov outside Moscow's Gorky Park yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: MISHA JAPANIZZE

Rivals trade accusations Dealers cash in on poll fever

David Hearst in Moscow

THE main candidates in Russia's presidential election yesterday indulged in mutual recrimination, saying the bomb blast on a Moscow metro train was a political act of terror designed to destabilise the ballot on Sunday.

No one has claimed responsibility for the bomb, but several groups stand to benefit from it. One such is a loyalist Chechen clan of fighters incensed that Moscow's latest deal with Chechen separatists would marginalise the loyalist role in future elections.

Another explanation is that rival groups of advisers in the Kremlin are embroiled in a power struggle with those preparing to do a deal with the Communists if the president, Boris Yeltsin, does badly in the first round.

In turn, the Communists suspect the bomb was an officially sanctioned act of provocation. Similar incidents took place before the storming of the White House, in October 1983. Four people were killed and at least 11 were seriously injured, among them a girl aged four, when the bomb exploded under seats on an evening train in a Moscow suburb on Tuesday night.

The Communists suspect the bomb was a sanctioned act of provocation

It was the worst act of political violence in a campaign which has become increasingly tense as polling day approaches. Mr Yeltsin said the blast was aimed at creating "an atmosphere of uncertainty and fear".

"The best response to the machinations of the extremists will be a vote on June 16, a vote for civil peace, for stability, for the future of Russia," Mr Yeltsin said.

The president and his ministers have repeatedly accused the Communists of

extremism, claiming that they are preparing to disrupt voting and set Russia on the path to a civil war.

Mr Yeltsin's main rival, Gennady Zyuganov, the leader of the Communist Party, said the bomb was one of several signs of "political lawlessness", of which the first was the launch of the war in Chechnya. He demanded security measures.

Viktor Ilyuchin, the Communist chairman of the parliamentary security committee, said the bomb attack could be used by Mr Yeltsin as an excuse to "begin repression against the opposition".

According to the Federal Security Service, the device contained up to 500 grams of high explosive and had been detonated by a timing device.

Mikhail Malutin, a passenger on the train when the bomb went off, said it exploded in a long tunnel, between Tulskey and Nagornaya stations.

"Taking in the account the time it went off — 9.16 in the evening — and where the train was, I consider the explosion was calculated to create the maximum propaganda effect and the minimum of victims. If they had wanted to kill people, it would have gone off in the rush hour and in the centre of town."

James Meek in Moscow

IF YOU bought Boris Yeltsin cheap in April, you're laughing now. And Mikhail Gorbachev is on the rise. On Russia's frenzied financial markets, every man has his price, especially if he aspires to the highest office in the land.

Proving they are every bit as inventive when it comes to exotic financial instruments as their counterparts on Wall Street or in the City, the steely-eyed young speculators of the Russian Stock Exchange have created a new market — in presidential futures.

The hotly-traded futures, changing hands at the rate of a billion roubles a day (£130,000), take the form of contracts predicting the percentage of the vote a candidate will win in the

first round of the country's presidential election on Sunday.

If the candidate gets more than the predicted percentage, the holder of the contract wins 10,000 roubles per percentage point. If less, the broker loses.

"I sold Yeltsin on the first day," said Valery Kozyrev, a broker aged 28, who was an assembly line worker at the ZIL car plant in Moscow until two and a half years ago. "I sold him and immediately lost money. But the price was absurd. I should have bought him."

Eight candidates are being traded, including the billionaire wealth-fund manager Vladimir Bryatsalov, a long-shot who has been added to the list with a quotation of one-twentieth of 1 per cent of the vote.

The market was launched on April 22 and presiden-

tial futures will change hands up to close of trading tomorrow, making it the last publicly-available indicator of voter mood before the elections, since last-minute polls are banned.

Although the lifestyles of the exchange brokers, who earn upwards of £1,300 a month, might seem far removed from the daily grind of Russia's impoverished masses, Natalya Belkina, head of the exchange's research department, believes the futures index is more accurate than opinion polls. "The pollsters aren't risking their own money," she said.

This week Yeltsin contracts were being opened at 33 per cent of the vote, slightly less than the latest polls, with Gennady Zyuganov on offer at 27.5 per cent, significantly more.

In the cool, vaulted space

of the exchange, brokers in slacks and T-shirts drifted in and out through electronic card-controlled turnstiles. With the main business of the day, dealing in finance ministry gilt futures, out of the way, the talk turned to Russia's Euro 96 chances and presidential form.

Mr Kozyrev said he held 12 million roubles' worth of presidential contracts, some on behalf of clients and some for his own amusement.

His most exotic are a bundle predicting that Mr Gorbachev will win an astounding 5 per cent of the vote, against the 1 per cent the pollsters predict. "I think I might lose on that, all the same," he said sheepishly. "Although I do have information that he hasn't been properly valued."



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Physical:

- Slots: 1 ISA, 1 PCMSA, 1 PCI
- Bays: 1 x 5.25", 3 x 3.5"
- 14" Energy Star DDC1/2B SVGA Monitor
- Windows® 95 keyboard and mouse

Preloaded Software:

- Windows® 95
- Works™ 4.0

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World news in brief

Heatwave sparks riots near Paris

FRENCH riot police were on standby in two Paris outer suburbs yesterday after clashes between young people and police led to three arrests. Violence was centred for hours on high-rise estates in Corbeil and nearby Grigny, south of Paris, until early yesterday morning, when riot police used tear gas and baton charges to disperse crowds. The trouble started when bored youngsters on the Tarterets estate at Corbeil set fire to a car and stoned firefighters who rushed to the scene. At Grigny, gangs set fire to cars, broke shop windows and set a building alight. An explosion of summer violence in poor areas had been expected because of the heatwave, and police are on permanent alert in many suburbs around industrial cities. Last year, clashes became a regular weekend feature on many rundown estates, some sparked by a film, La Haine, depicting hatred between young people and the police. The government is preparing plans to combat high unemployment zones, after President Jacques Chirac's visit to the Scottish outer suburb of Easterhouse. — Paul Webster, Paris.

Bangladesh poll marred

BANGLADESHIS voted in large numbers yesterday in the country's second parliamentary election in four months, but polling was marred by scattered violence in which at least three people were killed and more than 150 injured. Witnesses and poll officials estimated the turnout at more than 70 per cent of the 86 million registered voters. After a peaceful start, fighting between activists broke out in the afternoon despite the tight security imposed by 440,000 soldiers and security personnel. But the chief election commissioner, Abu Hena, said voting had been peaceful and fair, and a senior police officer described the incidents of violence as "fewer than feared". Poll officials said voting was suspended in more than 50 centres, but the figure could go up when reports from remote areas arrive. Final results are expected by tomorrow. — Reuter, Dhaka.

US 'breaks' Mafia bosses

UNITED STATES federal prosecutors claimed to have broken the leadership of the most powerful mob family in the US when they announced yesterday that 19 members of the Genovese Mafia had been indicted for crimes ranging from murder to racketeering. Officials said the 60-count indictment could virtually eliminate the New York City power base of the family, considered the most sophisticated and elusive Mafia clan in the country. Three of those arrested were described as leaders. Since 1980, the indictment said, the family had earned more than \$20 million from "traditional mob activities". But the family also profited, New York prosecutors said, from the Feast of San Gennaro, one of New York's most popular street festivals. "The Genovese crime family even used the facade of a religious festival to mask the object of their true devotion, which is the almighty dollar," said James Kallstrom, assistant director of the FBI's office. — New York Times, New York.

Judges block Internet law

FEDERAL judges in the United States yesterday blocked enforcement of a new law barring "indecent" material on the Internet, saying the worldwide computer network was protected in the US by the First Amendment guaranteeing free speech. A three-judge panel granted a preliminary injunction against the Communications Decency Act while two lawsuits pass through the court system. The case was brought by 57 groups including the American Library Association, and the government has promised to appeal to the supreme court. — AP, Philadelphia.

Divorcee dynamites court

A MAN giving evidence at his own divorce hearing in Sweden yesterday blew himself up with a stick of dynamite, wounding his lawyer and three other people in the crowded courtroom, police and court officials said. "He just stood up and pulled something out of his pocket, quite calmly," said a court attendant in the small town of Eskilstuna, west of Stockholm. "Suddenly there was an explosion, very loud in the courtroom. He and the woman lawyer next to him just collapsed. Everyone was screaming. It was chaos, madness." Other witnesses said the man appeared to wave a stick of dynamite at his ex-wife, shouting something that was drowned in the blast, in which he died instantly. A police spokeswoman said: "The bomb may have gone off earlier than he expected... All we know for sure is he must have been very upset by his divorce." — Jon Henley, Helsinki.



Homeward bound... A Vietnamese girl waves goodbye from the bus taking her and 200 others to the airport in Palawan, south-west of Manila, for voluntary repatriation

Satirist's free speech plea

A MOROCCAN political satirist, Ahmed Saroussi or Bziz, perhaps Morocco's most censored artist, yesterday appealed for international help to lift a government ban on his work. "The authorities do not want to understand that satire is a part of freedom of expression and a basic human right," Bziz, aged 41, said. He said he was beaten by police last week while trying to perform in support of jobless graduates in Rabat. The artist spoke at a news conference of the Moroccan Human Rights Association, attended by dozens of writers, artists, former political detainees and human rights activists. — Reuter, Rabat.

Man bites dog - fatally

A MAN in Oregon was sentenced to 18 months in prison for ramming a police car with his pickup truck, throwing a knife at officers and biting a police dog on its nose. The dog, named Ronnie, died from a streptococcus infection three weeks later. Police believe the bite was to blame. Arrvin John Kudnow hit the Dutch malinois after a 17-mile chase last December, when a petrol pump attendant reported that the driver appeared drunk. When the dog tried to bite his forearm, Kudnow grabbed Ronnie by his neck and bit his nose, police said. Kudnow was also ordered to pay \$594 (£386) in damages and undergo anger-control counselling. — AP, Oregon City.



Debris of war... Sarajevans continued their clean up yesterday as Nato tensions mounted over the links between US intelligence and the Bosnian government PHOTOGRAPH: HIMA/RET DELIC

Secrets and lies in Bosnia

Julian Berger reports from Sarajevo on claims that the US has been giving classified information to Bosnia, while Ed Vulliamy witnesses a gripping confrontation at the Hague war crimes trial

INTELLIGENCE gathering has become a source of division among the Nato allies in the Bosnian peacekeeping force (I-For) as British and French contingents fear that United States co-operation with the Sarajevo government threatens to compromise their mission. In the most damaging recent incident, European military intelligence services discovered the state department had given the Sarajevo authorities information about Iranian covert operations which had been gathered in a Nato operation. Last month John Kornblum, the US special envoy to the Balkans, gave a list of 10 suspected Iranian agents to the Bosnian authorities and requested their deportation. "Basically, the state department filched the information and gave it away to the Bosnians," said a British I-For officer. "It caused a certain amount of consternation here." The European intelligence services had wanted to stage a series of dramatic raids on suspected Iranian training camps, similar to a highly-publicised swoop on an alleged camp near the town of Fojnica in February. The raids would have been aimed at highlighting Bosnian non-compliance with the Dayton peace accord, which stipulates the total withdrawal of foreign forces. This would have had the effect of diminishing political pressure on I-For to take a more aggressive posture against the Bosnian Serbs and, in particular, to arrest the separatist leaders, Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic. The US government, on the other hand, is understood to be anxious to play down the Iranian role, at a time when

territory near the river port of Zvornik, heard gunfire and grenade explosions from a nearby hill. Immediately afterwards, seven men ran towards the platoon and put themselves at its mercy, saying they were Muslims fleeing Serb patrols. The American military police major who arrived on the scene soon afterwards handed them over to the Serb police, on the grounds that the Muslims constituted an illegal armed group. European officers in Sarajevo say there was near-panic in the US military headquarters in Tuzla when commanders learned of the incident. The group claimed to be from the former Muslim enclave of Srebrenica. They told the United Nations that they hid in the woods of eastern Bosnia for more than nine months after Serb forces overran the enclave and slaughtered thousands of men. However, the men — now eight after a subsequent arrest by Bosnian Serb police — looked better groomed and fed than would have been expected. Two in particular were fit and wore some form of uniform. Their pistols also appeared in good condition. Bosnian military intelligence also seemed well-informed about the group. A confidential Nato intelligence assessment in Sarajevo concluded: "This suggests that what is under way is a co-ordinated high-level effort to cover up an ABiH [Bosnian army] covert operation that went wrong." European officers believe senior officers in the US sector had approved the operation without the knowledge of the Europeans or lower-ranking US field officers. They also say the US military in Tuzla give the impression of knowing far more about the incident than they were prepared to share with their allies. The evidence for a conspiracy appears largely based on such impressions, and the fact that these theories circulate in ARRC Sarajevo headquarters perhaps says much about the mutual distrust. A non-US intelligence officer said: "I came here with a very naive view that we were all on one team. I wasn't really aware how much the national agendas would come into play."

had, she said, seen Mr Tadic "maybe every day, or even a few times a day", as he kept a cafe 200 yards from her house and practice. When the Guardian found the camp, she and an imprisoned doctor who helped her tend sick detainees passed over an undeveloped role of film which, when processed, revealed savage beatings dealt out to prisoners in the camp, who had come to her paltry medical facility for treatment. The still photographs and ITN video tape of Dr Blazevic in Trnopolje have been shown in open court and will be produced again today, with the doctor due to describe Mr Tadic's role in the ferocious subjugation of Kozarac. Dr Blazevic was a vet in the Bosnian town of Kozarac, and

US may lend troops again

THE United States defence secretary, William Perry, said yesterday he would recommend sending American troops to Bosnia again next year if Nato decides to deploy a new ground force to prevent a renewal of conflict there. Mr Perry stressed that no such decision had been made, but warned that Nato would not let its expensive peace-brokerage efforts go to waste. "If they make that decision [to send forces], it would be my recommendation that the United States participate in any force that is so designated, including ground troops, including whatever is determined," he said. — Reuter.

US may lend troops again

THE first eyewitness called to testify against the alleged Bosnian Serb war criminal Dusko Tadic in The Hague yesterday, on a face-to-face confrontation with the accused. It was an electrifying moment as Dr Azra Blazevic entered the courtroom, aimed a forthright stare at Mr Tadic, who in turn met her gaze, blinked, and then lowered his eyes towards his desk. According to the prosecution, these two people last met when Mr Tadic was ushering her and others into the Trnopolje concentration camp, uncovered by the Guardian in August 1992. Dr Blazevic was a vet in the Bosnian town of Kozarac, and

ing description of how Serbian artillery unleashed a relentless barrage against the mainly Muslim town between the morning of Sunday, May 24, 1992 and the following Tuesday. She told the tribunal how, along with local doctors and nurses, she had tried to aid the wounded in a medical centre, and then a motel, after the centre had been destroyed by shellfire. Dr Blazevic, a slight figure with a shock of dark hair and dressed in black, looked many years older than her age — 36 — as she began her evidence with a composure nevertheless charged with emotion, just a few yards from the defendant. Mr Tadic abandoned his usual nonchalance and looked flushed as he studied the witness, and video monitors showing the streets of Kozarac with almost every house gutted by shellfire. A shiver crossed the courtroom as the doctor picked out certain buildings near her former home, including the charred mosque. A few structures she identified were still intact, including Mr Tadic's cafe. The International Committee of the Red Cross took space on the Internet yesterday in an appeal for clues which could help its search for more than 12,000 people still missing from the Bosnian war. Internet users can now gain access to the ICRC missing persons database and send in information on the disappearances. The web-site is http://www.icrc.org.

MARKS & SPENCER SAFETY RECALL BABY'S GREEN SHORT-LEG DUNGAREE AND STRIPED T-SHIRT 2 PIECE OUTFIT ('AUTHENTIC' BADGE ON LEFT LEG POCKET) ALL SIZES (3 months - 18 months) SELLING PRICE £16

COLOUR	ITEM NUMBER
GREEN	T78 02805/1101

Marks & Spencer has established that some metal studs on the above dungaree may have been incorrectly applied and may come away from the garment. The individual parts of the stud may be hazardous to small children. This outfit has been on sale since mid March 1996 and has now been removed from display. Customers who have purchased this outfit are asked to return it immediately to the Customer Service Desk at their local store where a full refund will be given. Marks & Spencer apologises for any inconvenience caused to customers. NO OTHER ST. MICHAEL PRODUCTS ARE AFFECTED. StMichael

The allies suspect that the US is conniving at covert operations

Congress is increasingly sceptical about plans to arm and train the Bosnian army. The Bosnian programme has been held up until all military trainers from Islamic countries have left. A Sarajevo government official confirmed that a list of names had been handed over by Mr Kornblum, but said he was not aware of any action having been taken. "The people on the list were not serious — one was the Iranian ambassador's driver — and we told them this," said the official. "It was part of a more far-reaching operation by the Europeans. They tried a couple of raids after Fojnica, but they were failures. So they wanted a success." The row over the Iranian list has crowned a mounting sense among European staff in the Nato ARRC (Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps) headquarters in Sarajevo that the US agenda in Bosnia is overwhelming the "team spirit". The Europeans also suspect the US is either conniving at or turning a blind eye to Bosnian covert operations in northern Bosnia — in contravention of the Dayton pact. On May 10, a US artillery platoon, training on Serb-held

Jonathan Steele, page 9

Stopping Bosnia's war
Unfinished Balkan business back on the table

IS BOSNIA'S glass half full or half empty? Six months after the warring parties were bulldozed into signing the Dayton agreement, the governments and international organisations trying to shore up a shaky Balkan peace have no simple answers. Today's Dayton "mid-term review" conference in Florence will accentuate the positive. From the World Bank to Carl Bildt the public message will be a dual one: things are going quite well under the circumstances; and don't expect too much. There is good news on the military side of Dayton. The Nato-led peace implementation force - ifor - has done what it set out to, ensuring that a ceasefire has held, sieges end and three enemy armies stay in their barracks - and suffering no losses itself. No mean achievement, certainly, but that was always going to be the easy bit. On Dayton's harder, civilian, parts assessments are much more grim: very few refugees or displaced persons have been able to return to their homes; most have been blocked by local authorities determined to enforce ethnic segregation. At best some 50,000 of over 2 million people have gone back. In both the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Republika Srpska, little progress has been made on securing media access and freedoms, vital if free and fair elections - to provide the country with democratic institutions in which its three constituent peoples will cooperate - are to be held on schedule. Whatever else it does, Florence will choose September 14 as election day - the last moment allowed by Dayton. The US firmly opposes postponement for this is central to its own hectic timetable of withdrawal by year's end. Britain and Europe, happy finally to have the transatlantic ructions of previous years behind them, accept this, but are carefully lowering expectations about what is "realistic" as indepen-

dent monitors bluntly predict chaos and rigging. Bosnia's democracy, officials concede helpfully, will be a rough and ready one. Western spin doctors are addressing another difficult point: the glowering presence of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb civilian and military leaders facing war crimes charges. Robust talk about seeing them off has not been matched by successful political or military action. Discreet diplomats are talking about the dangers of "mission creep," or casualties, not a chance of glory for the SAS. Slobodan Milosevic, the West's flexible friend in Belgrade, has failed to deliver his erstwhile protégés. Milosevic told Warren Christopher, the US secretary of state, that if 80,000 Nato soldiers couldn't get them he certainly couldn't. Disingenuous, sure, from the man who set Bosnia ablaze, but fair comment say those who call it an outrage that these men are still at large. Yet this is about politics and economics as well as morality: Karadzic and Mladic are banned by Dayton from standing for election, but they will encourage fellow Serb extremists to dig in behind the brutal reality of ethnic partition. Desperately-needed physical and economic reconstruction will be held up too. Florence will not solve the thorny question of what happens after ifor, though signs are multiplying that Washington will look again at its own troop contribution if Bill Clinton is re-elected in November. But what these forces do matters far more than how long they stay. Bosnia has long gone off our TV screens and Florence may look like another conference where a confused world tries to contain a conflict it is not bold enough to halt. Yet this review should be a useful reminder that stopping a war and building a lasting peace are not the same things.



Letters to the Editor

Major's ill-judged gay encounter

No safety in jobs numbers

MORE bigotry emerges from the latest round of National Lottery grants (PM blunders with Lottery grants jibe, July 12). It seems that gays, lesbians, prostitutes and foreign nationals under threat of deportation are not worthy of charitable funds. Surely charitable funding should be about helping disadvantaged groups in society, including minority groups and those driven by poverty into activities such as prostitution. Charities working with these groups have a difficult time fundraising and the Lottery should be applauded for rewarding them for the valuable role they play in a civilised society. It is surely only a matter of time before questions are asked about the "ill-judged" grants made to charities like ours, which are working with people with drug and alcohol problems. We, too, have just received a much-needed grant and I remember the furore over similar grants made in the last round. Let us move away from this divisive and offensive notion of the "deserving" and the "undeserving" which plays right into the hands of the racist and the homophobic. Who will be next - single-parent families? Peter Martin, Chief executive, APA Community Drug and Alcohol Initiatives, 87-89 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6BP.

EVIDENTLY awards to anti-deportation appeals, prostitution and gay/lesbian rights are "out of kilter" with the feeling of the general public. In my view these are the only groups deserving of National Lottery cash. All the other so-called "charities" should be properly resourced from national taxation. The National Lottery Charities Board is a substitute for a well-regulated and fair taxation system. It takes money from those people least able to afford it, to subsidise those areas of public life which are rightly the province of public funding. This strongly suggests that the Prime Minister does not see lesbians and gay men as a part of society, and indeed is willing to condone bigotry and prejudice for narrow political gain. Angela Mason, Executive Director, Stonewall, 16 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R 0AA.

THE Government's apparatus of touchy gays shows how out of touch they are with normal people's lives. Most of us know a gay man or lesbian, possibly as a member of our family, possibly ourselves or our MP (Chris Smith, in my case). So what's the problem? What makes this all hard to swallow is the £6 million paid to the Churchill family for Churchill's notes about the war. You don't have to be a cynic to think that this is the type of grant that appeals to the establishment - along with "good causes" like the Royal Opera House. Seems it's OK to write a blank cheque for "respectable" in-

stitutions, but don't get involved in real people's lives. Bryan James, 8 Madras Place, London N7 8LU. Brixton John, the (classless society) Prime Minister, attacks as "ill-founded and ill-judged" projects set up and professionally run by the lesbian and gay community, projects which are desperately needed by the next generation. Of course, the Tories don't risk any attack from Labour on this one, it can only be a matter of days before Jack Staw or Jack Cunningham (the heroes of the "Clause 28" struggle) will propose a curfew for young lesbians and gay men, as a kind of protective self-censorship. And the accompanying silence from lesbian and gay Labour MPs will not surprise us either. Robert O'Neill Crossman, Highgate House, London SE26. I HAD not realised just how out of touch with its people the Government is. As a transsexual I can assure you that the gay community spends a lot of money on the Lottery. On a Saturday evening, when the results are announced, the pub is brought to silence. I also know several prostitutes, many of whom (besides their drug habits) have a gambling addiction. Catrina Day, Willingdon Drive, Manchester M26.

TAKE issue with Chief Secretary to the Treasury William Waldegrave's comments on job insecurity (Fears for job security 'unfounded', June 12). Job insecurity arises not only from the higher chances of someone losing their job, with one in four of the working population having experienced some spell of unemployment since John Major became Prime Minister. It arises, too, from the fear of what will happen if they do lose their job. For all its claims on job generation, the Government has not succeeded in reducing the time someone unemployed is likely to remain without work. Indeed, this is up by 50 per cent in the past five years. What's more, as the Labour Force and General Household surveys show, people who lose their jobs often have to take a pay cut of over 20 per cent to get a new job, which is more likely than not to be part-time, temporary or both. This explains why job insecurity is not, as Mr Waldegrave claims, "exaggerated", or, as the President of a Board of Trade supposed, "a state of mind". Especially for those 10.5 million people who have experienced unemployment in the past five years, job insecurity is an all too pressing reality. It demands the action on skills, investment and welfare-to-work which the Labour Party has proposed. Andrew Smith MP, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

Unionists step into a new world
For all the hassle, they gave the talks a principled start

PROGRESS - what progress? Talks - what talks? To anyone not well versed in Northern Ireland, events at Stormont must seem as discouraging as they are baffling. Yet do not take the slanging sessions at face value. Anyone who imagined that there could be progress without movement from some of the unionist parties was deluding themselves. Meanwhile down in the forest of Ulster politics, something important could be stirring, as unionism takes the first brave steps into a new political world. That noise you hear may even be the permafrost of 20th century Ulster beginning to break. On one reading, Tuesday night's wrangling session over George Mitchell's role in the talks was a reassertion of all the worst manifestations of unionist rejectionism. Listening to Ian Paisley's disgraceful abuse, it is easy to believe that this is not the 1990s but the 1960s. If an ephemeral matter like the chairmanship can provoke such posturing, what chance is there of agreeing something important, like the relationship between the two parts of Ireland? There is a more optimistic version. We could be witnessing one of the necessary steps in the process - the calling of Paisley's bluff. The Democratic Unionist leader has always represented a threat to the peace process, for the simple reason that he wants none of it. He speaks for many people, as Northern Ireland elections always show. But not for enough people any longer. The May 30 elections gave him his rejection-

ist mandate, which should not be underestimated. But it should not be overestimated either. Fewer than one voter in five endorsed his party, and Mr Paisley was rejected by a big majority of the unionist electorate. The DUP has stayed stuck, while much of the rest of unionism has begun to move on. Such progress as has been made at Stormont has been the work of David Trimble's Ulster Unionists and of the fringe parties which speak for the loyalist paramilitaries. Mr Trimble had legitimate concerns about the powers which the British and Irish governments (who often try to stitch things up without taking account of the people of Northern Ireland) were conferring on the talks chairman. But the DUP leader was right to want to do a deal over Mr Mitchell, and was right to be more concerned with the chairman's powers than with his identity. David Ervine of the DUP was also right to stress yesterday that things have got to move on. This is not to be naive about the sticking points. Yet it is important to remember that if the DUP, or Dr O'Brien of the UKUP, or Terry Dickson MP, or the reactionary Anglo-unionists who write editorials for the right-wing London press, had had their way, then there would have been no peace process at all. An alternative future for Northern Ireland demands change on all sides, among unionists not least of all. It would be churlish not to recognise the principled start which many of them have made this week.

Dirty tricks

YOUR article on the BA-American alliance (BA deal may deliver £100 fares to US, June 12) quoted several analysts who suggested that the reason for two dominant monopolies getting together to create a transatlantic monopoly might be lower fares of £100. Such nonsense beggars belief. It was interesting that US analysts rightly predicted that fares will rise as a result of this deal. Certainly if prices didn't rise as a result of increased monopoly power, it would be the first time in the history of capitalism. Adam Smith summed up the current situation over 200 years ago: "People of the same trade seldom meet together, even for merriment and diversion, but that the conversation ends in a conspiracy against the public or in the contrivance to raise prices." Let us hope that the Government acts quickly to stamp out the most anti-competitive airline deal since the war. Richard Branson, Virgin Management Ltd, 120 Campden Hill Road, London W8 7AR.

A few more reforms for Mr Birt

BEFORE correspondents drown in a sea of tears as they contemplate the demise of the BBC World Service (Letters, June 12), can I suggest they spend some time listening to it? When I travel abroad I always take my short-wave radio - but increasingly I wonder why. The World Service has effectively abandoned all coverage of Britain. Its managers have decided that since listeners of British origin now account for less than 10 per cent of the total, news has to be "world" news. You want continuous live commentaries of Five Nations rugby or Second Division soccer scores? Forget it. Its sports news now prefers to give you US baseball results or reports on Middle East tennis. Why not shut down the existing World Service? In its short-wave place, the BBC could broadcast a mixture of Radios 4 and 5. At least in this way we could all keep up to date with The Archers. Frank Barrett, Meriden Cottage, Weston Road, Bath BA1 2XZ. IF THE decision to create one directorate at the BBC for both TV and radio was based on the premise that they differ only in their "delivery systems", then we would urge John Birt to reconsider, because the premise is false. Without a separate directorate that has as its special remit the high standards and development of radio, the focus at management level within the BBC shall inevitably become blurred and weakened, with predictable implications for funding and production quality. Rachel Mawhood, Radio 4 Watch UK, c/o 32a Fairthorn Road, London SE7 7RL.

Family law bill

I HAVE recently been unsuccessful in an attempt to get a court order in favour of my first wife reduced. I have been obliged to pay her costs. I employed a firm of solicitors based in Farnborough, Hampshire, whose fees amounted to £4,000. My ex-wife of 30 years ago employed a firm of London-based solicitors. Their costs amounted to £21,000, reduced by them to more than £10,000. It is reasonable that London-based firms should charge so outrageously? Sir Julian Critchley, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters (letters@guardian.co.uk), and a telephone number. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

A Country Diary

STRATHDEARN: Taking nine of the older pupils from Farr Primary School on a "wildlife drive" was daunting to say the least, but it turned out to be very enjoyable and I was surprised just how much they knew about the countryside and its wildlife. For example I was told it was a mountain hare even as the animal sat and posed for us before lopping off and showing just how long its rear legs were compared with the front pair. The red deer stags were so close to the vehicle that the car's antlers were clearly visible and two of them rose on their back legs and boxed - much to the delight of the pupils, who all said it was the closest they had ever been to red deer. The wild goats were in two widely separated groups, with the nannies and their delightful kids in one part of the strath and the billys, including one that was estimated at eight-years-old by counting the annual growth rings on its horns. As the rain stopped a party of sika deer, hinds and calves,

Family law bill

WILLIAM Waldegrave claims that "big government not only destroys freedom - it destroys jobs". Most on the left would agree that it is better to create social cohesion from the bottom up, rather than the top down. Yet by most accepted measures, the size of the state has actually grown during Mr Waldegrave's time in government to a point where it now spends 42 per cent of GDP. I am sure he has read his Adam Smith and would accept that such a high level of government activity is likely to squeeze out enterprise and job creation rather than enhance it. It is therefore strange for him to claim that his government has created a lot of very well paid jobs for its lucky citizens. Ian Corfield, Head of research, The Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth Street, London SW1H 9BN.

The Lottery is not a political pawn
Ministers look very foolish attacking vulnerable charities

THE PROTEST could not have been more confected. It was badly planned, poorly executed and ended, deservedly, with egg all over the protesters' faces. On only the second round of the distribution of National Lottery Charities Board money, ministers moved ruthlessly to criticise the board on Tuesday. The Prime Minister spoke of a small number of "ill-founded and ill-judged awards". His spin doctors later revealed there were four - four on a day when 2,229 charities received £159 million. What was going on? Even the Lottery's chief cheer-leader, Virginia Bottomley, turned bossy boots declaring she would insist on vetting any controversial grants in future. Later yesterday Mrs Bottomley's National Heritage department was forced to correct their minister explaining she did not have the power to veto any award and could only ask the board to look again. By then the Prime Minister's

blunder had already been exposed with two of the four criticised projects already shown to be receiving government funds - and a third regularly consulted by the metropolitan police. The ministerial protests were a cynical exercise to divert media attention from a backbench Tory revolt on the Euro referendum. It succeeded to the extent of pushing the Euro story off most tabloid front pages which ran with "Major's Fury" at "Lott a Waste". But at what a price? A prime minister who once claimed he wanted to create a classless society showed himself ready to attack even the most vulnerable minority charities - two gay, one immigrant and one helping prostitutes - for narrow party advantage. Ministers did not just look foolish yesterday but cheap. The charity board, once again, emerged robust and independent. Rightly grants are based on purpose and competence, not public popularity.

Accentuating the positive

HOW familiar is Julian Horner with the situation of children and adults with mental handicap in Bulgaria (Sofia's asylums of death, May 22)? We feel deeply offended by his article, and are disappointed that you chose to use shock-horror tactics for the sake of a story. What do you think the consequences will be? Do you believe you have helped the situation? There are many British volunteers working in Bulgaria. How will their work be supported by the Bulgarian government now? Well done for getting Angel Volvoda closed! Where are the people now? Is their situation any

Accentuating the positive

better? Do you care enough to do more than sensationalise? People in Bulgaria recognise the problems. If you do care to look, there is good work being done. Many positive things have been achieved in a relatively short period. You should focus on what is being done to enable change, not on the deficits. We are trying to create positive images, to give value and respect to all people with a disability. Deborah Benfield, Rachel Harvey, EU Project for Mentally Handicapped Persons, Blvd Macedonia N22 Ap 6, Sofia 1606 22, Bulgaria.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'The Guardian', 'Dan Atkinson', and various other fragments.

Handwritten signature or mark at the bottom center of the page.

Diary Dan Atkinson

THE Fabian Society is reeling from a distressing first-hand experience of the new, deregulated job market that has resulted in distinctly un-Fabian feuding down in SW1. As a result, the heirs of Shaw and the Webbs were in turmoil yesterday with their treasurer having resigned and their top job vacant. For those who still imagine the Fabians to be a collection of agreeably easy-going gauche types untroubled by the vulgarities of modern life, here is the illusion-shattering story to date: they need a new general secretary; they offer the post at £20,000 a year; the Frontman is the acting GS, Glenys Thornton, Treasurer Nick Butler, a big-wig at oil giant BP and Labour man of 30 years' standing, deadlocks the society by objecting to her re-advertising the job at a more market-friendly £35,000. The Fabians agree, and promptly find they have a new candidate, Rosalind Hughes, of the Blairite Institute for Public Policy Research, alias Mrs N Butler, big fuss, and Mr Butler resigns on Tuesday night. Enter Rotherham Labour MP Denis MacShane yesterday, who clearly thinks the Fabians are not exactly overloaded with successful business executives: "Nick Butler is an outstanding member of the Fabian Society and I have written to him today asking him to reconsider his decision because I don't think his position should be connected to the appointment of a new general secretary."

ELSEWHERE, reports of off-duty drinking by members of Team Venables's England "team" may be the best news supporters of the national side have heard in years. A time-trip back to the golden age of English football courtesy of "This One's On Me, Jimmy" reaves's soccer memoir (1975: Arthur Barker), makes it clear the 1982 squad practically floated to their victory over Germany on a sea of booze. Alf Ramsey? "[He] could shift a drink or two... I have had several long sessions with him after matches when he has let himself go and really given the girls a tonic a good hiding." Bobby Moore? "I would have to put him pretty high in the table of international drinkers." Gordon Banks? Ray Wilson? "We stopped off at a favourite drinking oasis called The Beachcomber and it was fairly late when we got back to the hotel." This on the eve of departure for a match against Portugal in May 1964. Greavesie sums up: "I loved every minute of my England career. The goals and the pints..." But not necessarily in that order.

HERO of the week (so far): Johannes Ditz, Austria's economics minister until Tuesday, when he announced he would be offski at the end of the month. His reason for leaving the job was, according to Deutsche Presse, that, after 18 years in politics, he was "out of ideas".

GORDON BROWN, the man who would be the British Ditz (apart from the resignation, that is), gained first-hand experience yesterday of the sort of funding deficit likely to plague the next Labour government. The shadow chancellor was not exactly double-booked, but it was a tall order to make it through Birmingham where he delivered a mid-morning speech to the CBL, to the Four Seasons Hotel in Park Lane, where he was joint guest of honour (with Israeli ambassador Moshe Reviv) at a lunch held by Labour Friends of Israel. Prominent among the guests were the sort of industrialists and businessmen (Marks & Sparks took a table) that Labour has to reach, so there was no way Gordon could blow them out. A helicopter was rustled up to speed him from England's second city to her first: the thorny question of the chopper bill arose later. Friends chairman Norman Hogg, MP for Cumberland, fraternally suggested Labour chief whip Donald Dewar be stuck with the tab. In the event, an anonymous industrialist did the decent thing, making his lunch price even by Park Lane standards.



Prepare for surrender after Florence

Commentary Hugo Young

MALCOLM RIFKIND yesterday began preparing the retreat before Florence. Whether it will be accomplished without bloodshed is a gamble that Mr Major, like Napoleon before Moscow, has had forced upon him. There are scowling words one might use about this undignified exercise. Some have appeared here already. The attack should never have been launched in the first place. The issue, revolving round the purity of British beef, is one where the Government's belligerence is in inverse proportion to the justice of its cause. Nonetheless, the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary have had courage as well as retreat forced upon them. I hope they don't end up cut to pieces.

Mr Rifkind's chosen platform was a hearing of the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs. As a result of his recent charm offensive, he told the MPs, the atmosphere in Europe was "totally different". The partners were at last "trying to find solutions not problems". The Commission was now talking confidently about a framework agreement through which the bans on British beef, and the British bans on EU co-operation, would be progressively lifted, something unimaginable 10 days ago. None of this would have happened, he insisted, without the strong-armed tactics which, by the way, we had adopted in sorrow rather than anger. As a result, the poisonous row should last only "another week or so". Normalisation, in other words, beckoned. You could see how passionately the Foreign Secretary wished it to return. He looked white with an exhaustion that was surely moral as much as physical. Mr Rifkind is a barrister with an uncommonly swift facility for eluding tight forensic corners. When occasion requires, as it often has over beef, there's nobody better equipped to apply a smirking lawyer's condescension to any suggestion that the Government doesn't know what it's doing. There was precious little smirking and only a modicum of condescension yesterday. The improbable, extremity of the case Mr Rifkind has had to make is getting to him. The strategy, he did not hesitate to agree, was "desperately high-risk". He can't wait to be shot of it. We had a taste of some of

the extremities. There was, he said with grand incaution, "not the slightest evidence" that our beef strategy was having any effect on other matters in the EU where we had an interest. Nor, he asserted, were relations with non-EU countries, such as the US, being in any way damaged. Even the Third World countries innocently damaged by recent British vetoes had a worldly understanding that this was only a game, likely to last but a blink in history. Why, only the other day he was talking to the Syrian ambassador... Other intimations of normality were more piquant and more believable, but they carried the same message. Most telling is the Conservative Government's re-bonding with the European Commission. The Commission, from being the unexpected demon behind all those famous interferences in the nooks and crannies of British life, now turns out to be Britain's sturdy ally. Mr Rifkind called it in aid a dozen times. Other governments, with their responsiveness to markets and public opinion ("hysteria") rather than science, were the problem, not the Commission. The very fact that the Commission was not elected, he triumphantly concluded, was what made its science sound and its approach objective: a mandarin perspective, offered with no acknowledgement of its

irony, to stuff down the throat of William Cash. The FCO is getting back in business. Likewise, the Foreign Secretary seemed to recognise that the policy was causing havoc for those who have to implement it. Agents of diplomacy on the ground are having a hard time. Even mutic disagreement can be telling. I'm reliably told that Stephen Wall, our man in Brussels and the British representative at the Inter-Governmental Conference, at a recent session elaborately read out his brief, theatrically replaced the document in his bag and then resumed a pointed silence. It is hard on Mr Wall that the Labour Party have set their sights on replacing him; not with a businessman but because of the bit-part he played in matters covered by the Scott

When that possibility was put to him yesterday by a mildly sceptic Tory, Rifkind said he "absolutely agreed" how undesirable this would be. But this mild sceptic was, of course, a harbinger: possibly of Götterdämmerung. It has become very plain to Major and Rifkind that their tactic will not be viable beyond the Florence summit. Whatever success might be claimed for it up to then will be sharply reversed if the fudge is not permitted to occur. Yet the backbench merchants of catalysation, pushed around by Sir James Goldsmith, are showing little inclination to turn tail. The Foreign Secretary was anxious to stress the terms by which he wanted to be judged. These were strictly the Prime Minister's: his stated objective of a framework structure, not specific as to time. Parts of the ban will plainly continue, some of them probably for years. There may be a framework, but there's no way it can consist of an early reaffirmation of British control over British beef. Unfortunately, this has already been defined by the snarling editors and terrified backbenchers who are now directing affairs in the Tory Party as an unacceptable surrender. The question will be how many decide to say so, and how loud. In a normal political atmosphere, particularly on the eve of an election, a leader could depend on getting the benefit of the doubt. John Major must expect the opposite. We are entering a month of turmoil that is hard to call. What happens at and after Florence will be drama of the highest order, whose possibilities bear comparison with those of Rome in October 1950. Rifkind was signalling yesterday his and Major's response to the immovable object. Next comes the irresistible force.

There are those who reckon swearing reveals the taboos about a society — making faints at those things that are most revered. Some cultures indulge in elaborate questioning of paternity and mothers' honour. Others invoke bestiality or incest. Much of our own seems hung up on reproduction [basic mechanics of], and this week the actor Martin Clunes has predicted in the Radio Times that within a decade the f-word will be ubiquitous and unremarked on television programmes. But blasphemous language appears to be different. Those who are sensitive to it believe it to be truly subversive because it attacks the basis of faith and brings someone else's belief into disrepute. This is blasphemy as Britain has understood it since the Reformation, and which forms the basis of our blasphemy laws. It is also in this state-sponsored view of blasphemy that the fatwa was imposed on Salman Rushdie. But in the Christian tradition, swearing with religious connotations is another thing entirely. Some of the most colourful oaths in our language have had a religious basis. Zounds (by God's wounds), gadswoods, gadswags, gadswags, by the virgin's blood and so on, into a thousand colourful combinations. These oaths — and their modern equivalents, God help us — do not question the basis of faith: they rather place the swearer in a dizzying position, cocking a

snook at the deity and the hierarchy of belief. He or she demonstrates their agitation by invoking the sacred. In Catholic Italy, many exclamations veer towards the blasphemous by beginning with the Ma of Madonna and changing halfway into some other, less charged, word. Even if the oath is not explicit, the skitishness has still occurred. In this sense, swearing is a consensual act amongst believers. Between themselves, some churchmen concede, bad language (in the Broadcasting Standards Council sense) is not uncommon. But the important difference is that this devilment is contained within the family, the sect, the club. Far from undermining belief, it bears witness to it. It can even be an expression of anger. It is not a sign of indifference. When I spoke to a Catholic priest about this, he took a long, thoughtful breath, and mused, "Oh God." It might have been a prayer. The problem that television viewers perceive is that the nation is not one such club with a common set of assumptions and beliefs. Just as you might cheerfully believe there could be plenty more sex on television, you might not choose to watch it with your grandfather or granddaughter. Broadcasting, by definition, cannot know who is in the room at the time; it may not distinguish between different sensibilities. But the audience apparently does, and from the findings of the Broadcasting Standards Council viewers are sensitive to any brutality towards others' beliefs as well as their own. Forget the sticks and stones, it's the careless use of words that hurts.

BUT the answer surely is not to sanitise language so that it is inoffensive to all, bland and sticky like cola. Anger, reverence, outrage, provocation — all these may be reasons for using swear words with religious connotations. Simple emphasis is not if the Martin Clunes prophecy on the f-word is fulfilled, and its use becomes so broad that it pops up even on children's television, then one graphic Anglo-Saxon word will have lost its particular meaning. It will be hard to tell degrees of feeling or fury or even obscenity from it. Worse still, people like Martin Clunes won't be able to employ it to raise a titter. Yet for now, surprising as it may seem, there's still sensitivity to swearing with religious overtones, more so than to the arsenal of anatomical insults. It suggests, however unwittingly, a kind of religious awareness. The MORI poll this week may have suggested that 46 per cent of people do not believe that God exists, but their speech implies that they do.

How the Brits swear by Almighty God



Francine Stock

THOU shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. And if someone on television does, complain forthwith to the Broadcasting Standards Council. In our effing and blinding society, swear words of a religious origin still give greater offence than the anatomical kind. In the latest BSC monitoring report, there was greater complaint about the unjustified use of bad language than either sex or violence before the 6pm watershed. Swearing with religious connotations — by far the largest single category — accounted for 38 per cent of instances of bad language cited in those programmes monitored. The Broadcasting Standards chairwoman, Lady Howe, spoke of the "upset and hurt" this caused some viewers. In the league table of broadcast swearing, you can fornicate a moderate amount and shit where you want but please keep Jesus Christ out of it. There are those who reckon swearing reveals the taboos about a society — making faints at those things that are most revered. Some cultures indulge in elaborate questioning of paternity and mothers' honour. Others invoke bestiality or incest. Much of our own seems hung up on reproduction [basic mechanics of], and this week the actor Martin Clunes has predicted in the Radio Times that within a decade the f-word will be ubiquitous and unremarked on television programmes. But blasphemous language appears to be different. Those who are sensitive to it believe it to be truly subversive because it attacks the basis of faith and brings someone else's belief into disrepute. This is blasphemy as Britain has understood it since the Reformation, and which forms the basis of our blasphemy laws. It is also in this state-sponsored view of blasphemy that the fatwa was imposed on Salman Rushdie. But in the Christian tradition, swearing with religious connotations is another thing entirely. Some of the most colourful oaths in our language have had a religious basis. Zounds (by God's wounds), gadswoods, gadswags, gadswags, by the virgin's blood and so on, into a thousand colourful combinations. These oaths — and their modern equivalents, God help us — do not question the basis of faith: they rather place the swearer in a dizzying position, cocking a



Hidden protectors

Six months on from Dayton and there are still fears for the safety of returning electors in the coming Bosnian poll. Jonathan Steele calls for the Nato soldiers to come out of their barracks

IN the chaotic army of outside advisers which has doubled and trebled in Bosnia since peace was imposed, no group is more worried than the European Union's men in Mostar. The Chablis is chilled. The terrace is shaded. But the roofless wrecks of houses at the end of their hotel garden are a constant warning that almost nothing has been done to re-build shattered communities and broken lives. And deadlines are looming. While ministers meet in Florence this week, exactly half-way through the one-year mandate which Nato set when the Dayton peace accords were signed, what concerns the men of Mostar is not whether foreign forces will pull out in December. Their priority is the Mostar city elections in a fortnight's time. How, in short, are they going to avoid a bloody "battle of the buses" when thousands of refugees and displaced people try to reverse ethnic cleansing and go home to vote in defiance of the thugs? What are they going to do if Nato's peace implementation force, Ifor, maintains its pusillanimous refusal to get involved in policing or crowd control? The international spotlight

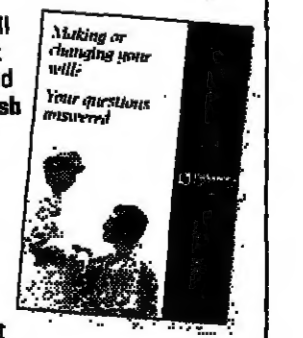
restore freedom of movement in Bosnia. It has mainly succeeded in creating freedom of movement for its own vehicles. They trundle up and down Bosnia's roads with varying degrees of paranoia. The Americans insist on nothing less than four vehicles at a time, their drivers sweating it out in flak jackets and helmets. Their camps are almost invisible behind mounds of sandbags while ferocious bumps across the road outside the gates bring traffic to a virtual halt. The British are more relaxed behind their simple chicken wire, yet so far all nations agree on staying out of the refugee-protection business. They are willing to help transit travellers by ensuring that no paramilitary roadblocks pop up. Buses now ply from Bosnia to Croatia through Serb territory, without trouble. The problem is when people want to go home to stay, or even — as in the case of Mostar — just to cast their votes. The word in military circles is that "we can't put a tank outside every door". It is an argument taken to the absurd. All that is needed is for Ifor to take a more assertive role and protect at least some groups of refugees. Which brings the case back to the divided city of Mostar. Elections are being held early under the agreement which the Americans brokered between the Croats and the Bosnians in February 1994, while the war with the Bosnian Serbs still raged. If the accords on Mostar were a foretaste of Dayton, the city's

elections in two weeks' time will be a foretaste of the one due for the whole of Bosnia in September. Like Dayton, the accord on Mostar talked of unity and partition in the same breath, leaving it to the implementers to decide which they preferred. Mostar was drawn into three Bosnian-majority areas with a central council under joint control. Most of the 50,000 people who lost their homes were Muslims and now they wish to go back to vote. Some will come from across the river, others will wish to drive from other parts of Bosnia, and a few may even come from Britain and other European countries. Security officials fear bloodshed and killings. "It is an enormous worry," says Sir Martin Garrod, the British general who is the EU chief of staff in Mostar. "There are real fears for the safety of candidates as they campaign, for voters who want to cross the city to cast their ballots in their old home districts, and for refugees on the buses which will be coming to Mostar."

THE security nightmare for the Mostar poll has highlighted another flaw in Dayton. The EU is paying the local election officials in Mostar. By contrast, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which is running the Bosnia-wide poll, has told the governments of the two "entities" in Bosnia to pay their election officials themselves. Dozens of judges and lawyers who had volunteered to register

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£4bn growth strategy, that must be the Daewoo masterplan, page 12

Tomorrow: How the insurers see their world

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Finance Guardian

'Not a question of black or white' - Bank chief



Windblown but not off-course. The Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, arrives at the Mansion House to deliver his speech. PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARGLES

No rates rift, says George

THE Bank of England Governor, Eddy George, last night sought to play down speculation of a serious rift between himself and the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, over last week's quarter-point cut in interest rates. But in an otherwise generally upbeat speech he warned that while small changes in policy could easily be reversed, the judgments on which they were based could have an impact on expectations within financial markets and the wider economy. Mr George, however, was dismissive of what he described as the "inordinate interest" in what had been said in his recent meeting with the Chancellor ahead of the decision to cut interest rates. He told his audience at the City's elite at the annual Mansion House dinner: "Most forecasters would expect both annual growth and inflation to be within a range of some 2 to 3 per cent over the next two years. Within something like that range almost anything could happen: it is not a question of black or white."

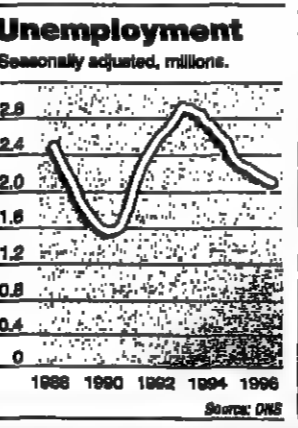
to last week's rate cut because of concerns about inflation although the Governor gave little evidence of any serious disquiet last night. He said he expected the underlying rate of retail price inflation "to fall into the target range of 2.5 per cent or less in the period ahead". Inflationary pressures in the market for both goods and services, as well as the labour market, were "currently subdued", he said. Setting policy was a question of judging the balance of probabilities about what would happen and the balance of risk of erring "one side or the other". In what he described as a generally more stable environment it was possible to adjust policy in small steps "which can if necessary be more easily reversed". But he cautioned that the judgments on which such changes were based "still matter, not just for their impact on demand, but because they also can change expectations about future policy, and affect behaviour indirectly in both the financial markets and the wider economy". However, Mr George argued that the "real news" was not what happened in last week's meeting with Mr Clarke but the UK's economic performance. Inflation had fallen from an average of 12.75 per cent in the 1970s to 7 per cent in the 1980s, to 4.5 per cent in the 1990s and to 2.75 per cent over the last four years. That was a huge improvement, said Mr George, although he cautioned that it was not quite down to either the UK monetary authorities' target range or the inflation rates of some of the other Group of Seven industrialised countries. Mr George also noted that Britain was now in its fifth successive year of relatively steady growth which he was confident could be sustained, while unemployment had fallen consistently over the last three years and was now the lowest within the larger European economies. "These economic developments have been accompanied over the past four years by more stable as well as lower nominal interest rates, and by a much more stable effective exchange rate." Mr George acknowledged that it would take years before people were finally convinced that stability was permanent. But he added: "We are nevertheless well on course for bringing economic and financial good health to the nation and to the City."

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Part-timers keep dole queue down

BRITAIN'S growing array of part-time workers has pushed the unemployment rate down to its lowest level for five years, according to official figures published yesterday. The number of people out of work and claiming benefit dropped by 14,800 to 2,167,600 last month, accounting for 7.7 per cent of the workforce - the lowest rate since 1991, the Office for National Statistics said. DNS statisticians held out the prospect of unemployment dipping below two million next year, estimating that on average 10,000 people would come off the dole queue each month. If this is accurate, the two-million barrier will be breached by October 1997. Although separate data yesterday showed more job-

shedding in manufacturing - underlining continued weakness on the industrial side - government ministers welcomed the shorter dole queue. Eric Forth, junior Education and Employment spokesman, said the figures were evidence of a "dynamic and fast moving economy". Treasury officials pointed to a rise in job vacancies as a sign of a strengthening labour market. But Labour pointed to further signs that part-time jobs were taking the place of full-time positions. According to the quarterly labour force survey, the number of people in work jumped by 118,000 over the three months to February - but three-quarters of the new posts were part-time. "A look behind the figures shows that any recovery is built on the flimsiest of foundations," said Michael Meacher, shadow employment spokesman. "Job insecurity is rife and the outlook for manufacturing industry continues to be bleak." The ONS said the number of factory workers fell by 18,000 between March and April. Fresh jobs were on offer in service industries and retailing. City analysts said the overall figures were in line with expectations. Alex Garrard, UK economist at brokers UBS, said: "The data bear further testament to the sharply divergent fortunes of the manufacturing and service sectors."



Ken's firm line soothes the City



Edited by Alex Brummer

THOSE in the City and business communities who have been waiting for a senior minister to speak up for Europe will not be disappointed by Kenneth Clarke's performance at the Mansion House last night. Black tie may have replaced white tie in the sartorial stakes, but Mr Clarke shows no signs of buckling to the Goldsmith-backed wing of the Tory party over Maastricht or tax cuts. While the 20p basic rate of tax remains a Conservative goal, Mr Clarke's emotive attack on those who advocate slashing taxes and hanging the deficit, suggests that hopes of big reductions to come in November's Budget are probably misplaced unless there is an astonishing change in the public finances. If, for instance, the Government were tempted to go for the 20p rate, it would cost them around £5 billion. That would certainly throw out all the Chancellor's good intentions of a balanced budget over the medium term. As to the much trumpeted removal of capital gains and inheritance taxes, the centrepiece of John Major's speech at the party conference in 1995, that is clearly on the back burner - but three-quarters of the new posts were part-time. "A look behind the figures shows that any recovery is built on the flimsiest of foundations," said Michael Meacher, shadow employment spokesman. "Job insecurity is rife and the outlook for manufacturing industry continues to be bleak." The ONS said the number of factory workers fell by 18,000 between March and April. Fresh jobs were on offer in service industries and retailing. City analysts said the overall figures were in line with expectations. Alex Garrard, UK economist at brokers UBS, said: "The data bear further testament to the sharply divergent fortunes of the manufacturing and service sectors."

nal about inflationary expectations. This is a concept on which his opposite number in the US, Alan Greenspan, has often focused. It is not simply the act of cutting rates which influences markets, it is the broader judgment on policy stance which, in turn, feeds through into bond yields. The Government may need to reassure itself and the electorate that the UK has the best economic record in Europe and the G7, but the Governor feels no such compunction. He notes that the UK's inflation rate, for all its improvement over recent years, is still not down to either the target level or that "in most other G7 countries". Mr George appeared disappointed that he was not able to report to the assembled City fathers of a third year in which growth was greater than inflation. Nevertheless, he is hoping the action played by the umpire, in the shape of revised gross national product figures, will leave his record intact.

Smiths' hurrah

THE long-awaited strategic review at WH Smith falls short of the radical restructuring which had been expected. Due to the generosity of its partner, Boots, Smiths have cleared out of Do It All relatively cheaply and at a leisurely pace, while the decision to sell Business Supplies and focus on core retail businesses in book and CD retailing looks sensible. It would be nice to think that chief executive Bill Cockburn will get the four years he has set himself to turn around WH Smith. After all, longer term building of businesses is as critical as short-term financial gains. However, it is unlikely that institutions, frustrated by Smiths continued difficulties, will be happy about this timetable. Mr Cockburn also appears to be taking an enormous risk by the decision to cut its product range from 48,000 to 35,000. One of the attractive features of Smiths-type retailing is its comprehensive cover, something which is increasingly being recognised as useful with the rebirth of departmental stores. The last thing that WH Smith needs is to drive business into Woolworths or the more aggressive news agency chains. No doubt the savings and write-offs of £285 million will make a useful contribution to its financial prospects. But this does not look like an Asda style turnaround.

Chinese burn

HOW quickly a golden opportunity lost can change into a disaster avoided. British Telecom, during five months of talks on a possible £35 billion merger with Cable & Wireless, made no secret that it lusted after the C&W's 38 per cent stake in Hongkong Telecom. Quite a few BT executives must now be relieved that the talks failed, given the Hong Kong government's plans to curtail HKT's lucrative international calls monopoly.

Chemicals directors 'in plot to cook the company books'

TWO successful company executives "cooked the books" of an international chemicals firm after it over-stretched itself in takeovers, an Old Bailey court was told yesterday. Richard Lines and Thomas Baxter tried to conceal MTM's trading problems "from those who might otherwise have decided against acquiring or would have disposed of MTM's shares if they had known the true position," said Vivian Robinson QC, prosecuting. "They, assisted by others, cooked the books relating to the years 1990-91 in order to give the impression that the company was a good deal more profitable than was in fact the case." Mr Lines, aged 59, the former chairman and a founder of MTM, from Newton under Roseberry, North Yorkshire, and Mr Baxter, aged 44, who was the company's finance director, from Dollar, Central Scotland, have denied plotting to give false information for MTM's accounts in 1990 and 1991 and making mislead-

ing, false or deceptive statements about the company's trading position. Mr Lines and Mr Baxter had control of the business and its accounting policies, said Mr Robinson. They were of good character "and there can be no doubt that both in their different ways were successful and well regarded". After the company's shares were listed on the Stock Exchange in 1986, it started an expansion programme. "Those activities culminated by the end of 1990 in two major additions to the group - both in the US," said Mr Robinson. MTM first acquired the chemical company Orsynes, based in Columbus, Ohio. This was quickly followed by the takeover of Hardwick, a chemicals manufacturing company in South Carolina. "For that acquisition, MTM had to raise substantial finance," said Mr Robinson. The pair embarked on a series of dishonest schemes "designed to enhance MTM's financial standing in the eyes of the City and in the eyes of current and potential investors," Mr Robinson said. The trial continues today.

Legal row spoils Heseltine plan to help business

GOVERNMENT proposals to shake up business support services - being unveiled today by Michael Heseltine - have been unveiled today by a 550 million legal row threatening the future of the country's Training and Enterprise Councils. The Deputy Prime Minister is expected to use his third Competitiveness White Paper to outline two main initiatives to boost the performance of small and medium-sized firms and the agencies, like TECs, which serve them. He is due to announce a cull of nearly 100 government support schemes in favour of a more coherent approach and will also be calling on TECs to merge their operations with local chambers of commerce. But attempts to defuse a legal battle over whether TECs are businesses or charities have failed. Claims by Oldham TEC that it is a charity and liable for tax rebates of £180,000 are to be challenged by the Inland Revenue in the High Court on July 25. Oldham has been backed by the Revenue's special commissioners. The TEC movement, the Government, the Inland Revenue and the Charities Commission acknowledge that a change in Oldham's status would apply to all 81 TECs, forcing the payment of about £50 million in tax rebates. TEC directors would face more liabilities as part of a charity. Since the legal crisis emerged in April four planned mergers between chambers and TECs, of which Heseltine favoured by Mr Heseltine, have been put on hold. Six that have been completed are now seen as highly vulnerable. Labour yesterday said it had received leaked papers showing that Mr Heseltine wished to redirect £240 million of spending on business support schemes through agencies like the TECs.

Granada seeks Forte hotel exit

GRANADA Group said yesterday it expected to start selling some of the Exclusive hotels acquired during January's £3.9 billion assault on Forte in as little as three months' time. Granada, which said it had sent details of the hotels to potential buyers and said he expected the hotels to be sold in packages of two or three at a time. "My guess, and it's just a guess, is that we will start to see the thing rolling in about three months' time," he said. "It may take longer to dispose of the package, and it's hard to determine what the mix of sales will be." The disclosure came as Granada announced a 19 per cent improvement in first-half pre-tax profits, to £183.3 million, including £33.5 million from the old Forte businesses in

their first two months as part of Granada. Granada shares closed up 16p at 831p on the news. Unraveling the figures, Mr Robinson said the group was "more than comfortable" with the controversial £100 million profit improvement target it had identified during the Forte bid. He said: "We will achieve that figure, but these results should also lay the ghost that we needed Forte because our underlying businesses were not performing." Mr Robinson also disclosed details of Sir Rocco Forte's recent failed attempt to buy back the Meridien chain and all but around four of the old

Fort Exclusive hotels. He said: "I always thought it would have been a very elegant solution for some of the hotels to have gone back to Sir Rocco, but the price was not right. He offered £970 million for hotels that we thought were worth more than 50 per cent more." Despite a disposal programme which includes the overseas rental business, Granada has decided to keep one Forte asset - the corporate jet it pledged to sell during the bid. Mr Robinson said: "Traveling to all the Meridien hotels made it worth keeping - Forte didn't get everything wrong."

Smith 'saviour' reveals 4-year plan

WH SMITH, the newsagent book and record retailer, yesterday admitted that sweeping changes designed to rehabilitate the group in the eyes of investors could take four years to bear fruit. The group unveiled the results of its well-leaked strategic review which include axing another 400 jobs, vacating its costly Sloane Square head office and increasing the number of Waterstones and Virgin megastore outlets. In addition the group, which has issued two profit warnings in as many years, intends to reduce the range of

products on offer in its flagship high street shops from 49,000 to 35,000 items. This is on top of the already announced disposal of its 50 per cent of Do It All to Boots, its partner in the venture, and the sale of WHS Business Supplies, which includes the Niceday brand of stationery, to Guilbert of France. But analysts yesterday complained that the group has not set itself a sufficiently punishing schedule to deliver the results of the review, which will result in exceptional charges of £140 million in the current financial year before £34 million of tax and another £145 million of goodwill write-offs. Bill Cockburn, the newly

installed chief executive, said the group now had a "four year agenda" to build itself into a "world class retailer". This will also include limiting investment in its US music business, The Wall, although the distribution operation, WHS News, will be retained. The City had, however, expected more in the way of specific savings to emerge from the changes and had hoped for a quicker pay back. Although Mr Cockburn is regarded as having delivered the required refocusing and refinancing he has still failed to silence fears that the core chain is beyond recovery. Analysts said the main WHS outlets were under attack from specialists such

as its own music and book shops, Waterstones and Virgin/Our Price, and from the supermarkets. "The danger," commented one expert, "is that what makes sense arithmetically won't work in terms of the stock and consumer will just go elsewhere." Shares in the company remained unmoved at 485p by yesterday's statement, much of which had already been flagged. Although Mr Cockburn was regarded as being "overly generous" in allowing himself four years to revive the group's fortunes, another analyst said: "Fixing Smith's is a long term job, if indeed it is fixable at all."

Table with columns for country and bank name, listing various international banks and their services.

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EURO 96

The good, the bad and the indifferent

Group A

England

TERRY VENABLES may be taking the current fad for Sixties football nostalgia too far. Remembering the days when Jim Baxter beat England on his own after a week on the tiles, the coach seems to have evolved a theory of beating the Scots by packing his own side with latter-day Baxters. Let's get the whole thing over with, the instinct says, and avoid further humiliation before moving quietly into the Hoddle era. But odd things can happen. Shearer, after all, had only one decent chance against Switzerland, and converted it. More probably the nightmare will play itself to an early conclusion. Entertainment value: 3/10

Switzerland

WOULD they have beaten England, had Artur Jorge not dash to leave Sutter and Knup at home? The elegant Ciriaco De Simone ran the early stages of the game against England with some conviction, and Johann Vogel looked a fine prospect once McManaman had been removed, but lacking a fully fit Stéphane Chapuisat they seemed no better than lightweights. Too predictable, probably, to cause the Dutch great concern tonight; and if there is still something at stake for the Scots by the time they meet the Swiss are unlikely to provide an insurmountable barrier. Entertainment value: 4/10

Holland

NOT as threatening as expected, partly because of the enforced absence (Overmars, Blind, Frank de Boer, a fit Kluiterveld) but more significantly because they miss the guiding spirit of Frank Rijkaard as much as Ajax did against Juventus in the European Cup final. If Guus Hiddink has a solution, it is unlikely to involve his misguided belief in Jordi Cruyff. The one player with the ability to galvanise the likes of Seedorf and Davids is Dennis Bergkamp, if he could bring himself to stop stalling about being required to play up front and take a proper degree of responsibility. Entertainment value: 6/10

Scotland

IF they can continue to play as they did against Holland, with passion and luck but also with concentration, they will carry on winning friends in unlikely places (in other words, England). Nobody outside Holland begrudged them Collins's penalty let-off; the player himself had earned it with a display that must be making Monaco think they have a bargain on their hands. Thanks to Craig Brown's good-humoured openness and the whole side's modesty, this is one Scotland squad not imperilled by hubris. But they need goals, probably from Spenser, if they are to make progress. Entertainment value: 5/10

Group C

Germany

NO ONE likes us; we don't care. Among those who apparently disapprove of the Germans is David Elleray, who gave them six cautions during a match otherwise notable for their clinical efficiency. So Thomas Häßler and Andreas Möller, as close as you will find to a pair of classics inside forwards in modern football, each had a yellow card to carry through the end of the tournament: a heavy burden for the team's creators. Jürgen Klinsmann's return from suspension should improve their overall watchability, but probably not enough to make them loved. Entertainment value: 4/10

Russia

IN the entire tournament, will we see football more pleasing than Russia's first-half performance against Italy? Nobody who watched Spartak Moscow against Blackburn Rovers last autumn could have been surprised by the easy control, the fluid movement, the oblique angles of running and passing. The sheer coherence of the Russians' play. Or by the panache with which Ilya Tymbalar, twice his country's Player of the Year, took his chance. Alas, it wasn't enough. When Italy reorganised and raised the pressure, Russia had no answer — as may well happen when they meet Germany. Entertainment value: 7/10

Results

Rugby Union

Tennis

Baseball

Cycling

Evening racing

Hockey

Cricket

Fixtures

Soccer

Rugby League

Cricket

Hockey

Cricket

Hockey

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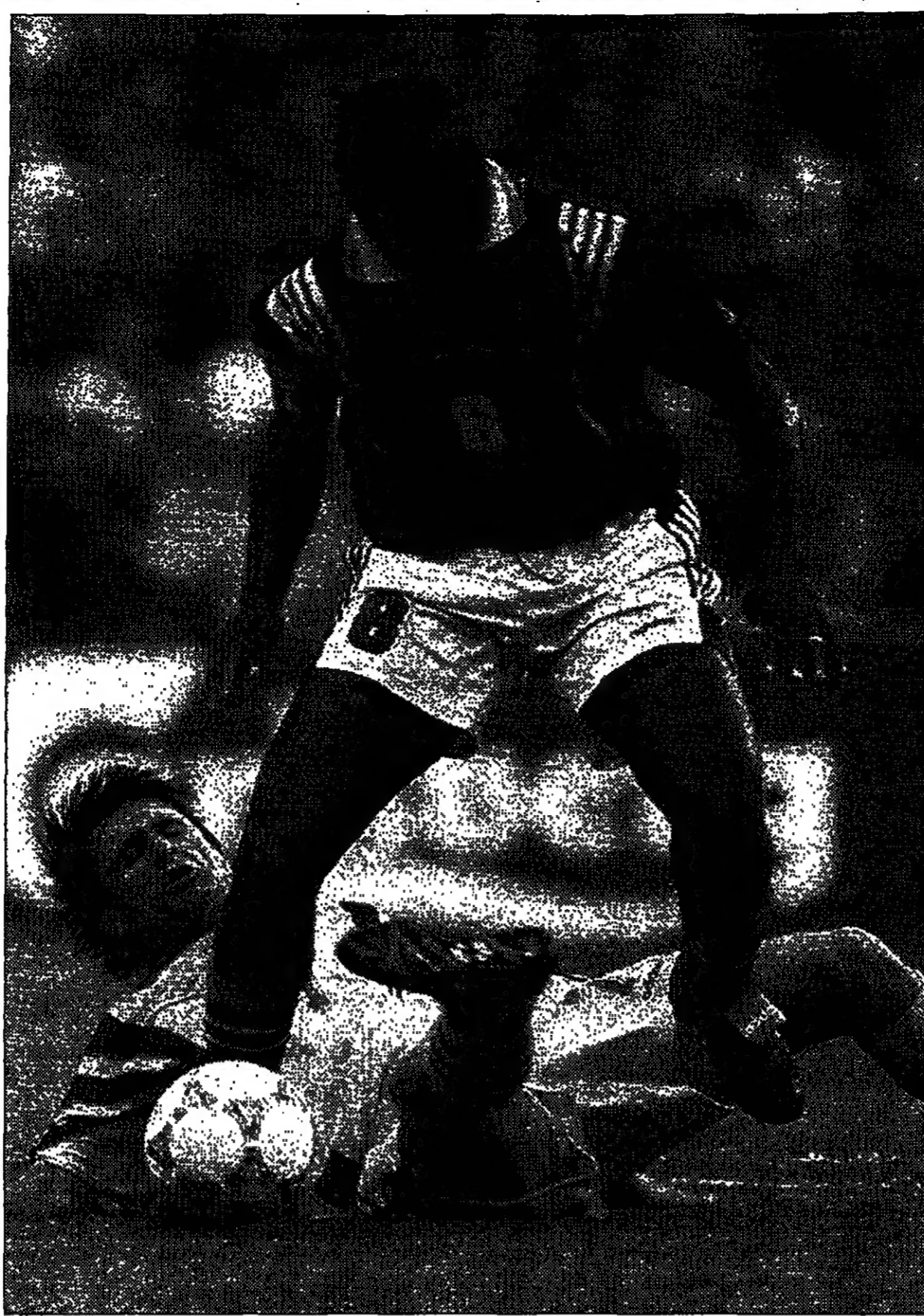
Hockey

Cricket

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Hockey



PLAYER OF THE WEEK: Marcel Desailly, 27 years old, is the enforcer of the France team, a skilful footballer who lines up alongside Laurent Blanc in the back four but is also happy to advance into the 'holding' midfield position — the role in which, on behalf of Milan, he destroyed Barcelona in the 1994 European Cup final. Any team wanting to beat France will have to get by Desailly first.

Richard Williams attempts to unravel the plot after the end of the competition's first chapter and assesses each side for entertainment value

Group B

France

AFTER an uncertain start they profited from a fortunate goal to dominate Romania with a pattern notable for the mobility and subtle medium-range interpassing of the front three players. Dugarry (or Loko), Zidane and Djorkaeff work off the steady platform provided by Deschamps, Karembeu and Guerin; they in turn can do their work in the knowledge that, in Desailly and Blanc, Aimé Jacquet has the tournament's strongest central defence. After 10 wins in a row, their morale is at a peak; the evidence is the enthusiasm with which the forwards press up on the opposing defence. Entertainment value: 8/10

Bulgaria

PRACTICALLY pawing the ground in his impatience, the perennially ill-tempered Hristo Stoitchev seems ready to unleash a whole season's energy over the next three weeks. The fans back in Parma, for whom he scored exactly four goals last year in Serie A, may be less than enchanted. The rest of us will hope for more displays like the one he gave against Spain, during which he had a gorgeous goal unjustly disallowed. At 30, this probably his last stand: the same goes for Lechkov, Penev, Kostadinov, Ivanov and Kirjakov, and the signs are they will be giving it a real go. Entertainment value: 7/10

Spain

WHATEVER the Spanish team achieve this month, we are unlikely to forget the tall, unassuming figure of Fernando Hierro firing his rocket shots from the middle distance against Bulgaria. His team-mates blend skill with spide, an interesting combination that should prove too much for Romania and may even give France a serious problem. But the Spaniards more than most will need to watch out for second yellow cards, after four cautions (and the sending-off of the striker Pizzi, whom they will miss) in the opening match. The experience throughout the side may take them further. Entertainment value: 6/10

Romania

THEY started with a familiar assurance against France, but lost heart and coherence after goalkeeper Stela's misjudged excursion allowed Dugarry to head home off a defender's shoulder. The great Gheorghe Hagi looks fitter than he did at the World Cup two years ago, but on Monday every chance that came to one of the world's best left-footed players seemed to arrive on his wrong side. And West Ham's management must be having the sort of doubts about Raducioiu that thorough scouting would have revealed much earlier. Another ageing side, now functioning on memory. Entertainment value: 5/10

Group D

Croatia

HAVING refused to get out of first gear in their friendly against England at Wembley in April, the Croatians changed up against Turkey — but only to second. Davor Suker and Alan Boksic missed what chances were made, while their captain, the talented Zvonimir Boban, seems to be suffering from a variety of the disease that afflicted Ray Wilkins in an international shirt: an excessive sense of responsibility. Boban needs to get up with the strikers, and sometimes beyond, if Croatia are to justify the claims made on their behalf. But Goran Vlaovic's late breakaway goal was a beauty. Entertainment value: 5/10

Portugal

PELE and Gullit like them, which ought to be good enough for the rest of us. The romantics' favourites are the tournament's honorary South Americans, meaning they construct their play according to an entirely different set of rhythms. Who didn't enjoy watching Rui Costa, Paulo Sousa, Joao Pinto and Sa Pinto pitting their wits against the watchful Danes? One would like to be able to say that they are strangers to cynicism, but Joao Pinto's dive prevents that. Still, after years of Under-21 success, perhaps this is the team to restore the senior side to a status unknown since Eusebio's day. Entertainment value: 9/10

Denmark

THEY may have parted their way to the trophy in 1992, but Denmark are adopting a very different attitude to the defence of the title. Faced with Portugal's rapturous improvisations, they sat back and conducted a holding operation, waiting for the gaps to appear before committing themselves. Once on the attack they moved well without looking irresistible, although Brian Laudrup's contributions were invariably with damaging and attractive to watch, and his goal was a beauty. His brother Michael, by contrast, wasn't at it all. But Peter Schmeichel's presence remains a hugely reassuring factor. Entertainment value: 5/10

Turkey

THEY are delighted to be here, for their first big tournament since 1954 — and it showed against Croatia, when all their terrific motivation and sometimes overcommitted tackling was not enough to enable them to hold out against much better footballers operating on a lower plane. The blond wing-back Ercan Abulluh worked as hard as anyone, and often to better effect, but Galatasaray's Hakan Sukur did nothing to suggest that he is capable of troubling other defences more than he did the Croatians. A learning experience for the players and coaches then, and a treat for their fans. Entertainment value: 1/10

Dutch picture looks muddled at the front and Blind behind

HOLLAND will be a couple of players closer to full strength today for their game against Switzerland at Villa Park. Danny Blind returns at sweeper and Peter Hoekstra comes in on the left wing. It seems likely that Blind will replace Johan de Kock at the back and Hoekstra will displace Gaston Taument, with Jordi Cruyff

Leeds ready to sacrifice McAllister

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Advertisement for 'The Guardian' newspaper, featuring the headline 'Monsters green and blue' and 'Walton b... of the field'. It includes a large graphic of a footballer and promotional text for the newspaper's content and subscription information.

Handwritten signature or mark at the bottom center of the page.

Golf

David Davies in Detroit finds the world's top players checking their survival kits on the eve of the US Open

Monster lurking green and mean

THE course is only 6,827 yards long, not exceptional these days, but Oakland Hills is by common consent the most brutal examination ever offered to those who want to win the US Open championship. Its nickname, bestowed by none other than Ben Hogan, is The Monster.

This morning 156 players will try if not to overcome it then at least to survive it. In the 96th playing of the US Open, which has come to this course for the sixth time, only Oakland Hills, but against that the two previous winners, in 1961 and 1951 respectively, were the classicist Gene Littler and then Hogan himself.

Indisputably one of the three greatest players ever. Before the event was played in 1951, Robert Trent Jones, the course architect, was called in to toughen it up. He succeeded to the extent that for the first 54 holes of the competition no one broke the par of 70, and in the final round only two people did so.



Three ages of golf... Jack Nicklaus, left, Tom Watson and Tiger Woods practising their art

harder than those at Augusta. The contours are extremely steep and there are ridges running from front to back as well as from side to side. The club professional Pat Crowell, discussing them, said that if the greens were relatively slow, because of the recent rains, then a 10-foot putt would have three to four feet of break; if they quickened up during the week that would go to five feet.

Faldo is the only man this year who can do the Grand Slam, a monumental task which he refuses to discount as impossible. "But if Nicklaus and Hogan couldn't do it," he said, "that shows you what it is: fractionally higher than Everest."

Montgomerie is another theoretical favourite, given that he specialises in the principal demand made by the course: straight driving. He also feels that conditions in the US Open and the USPGA

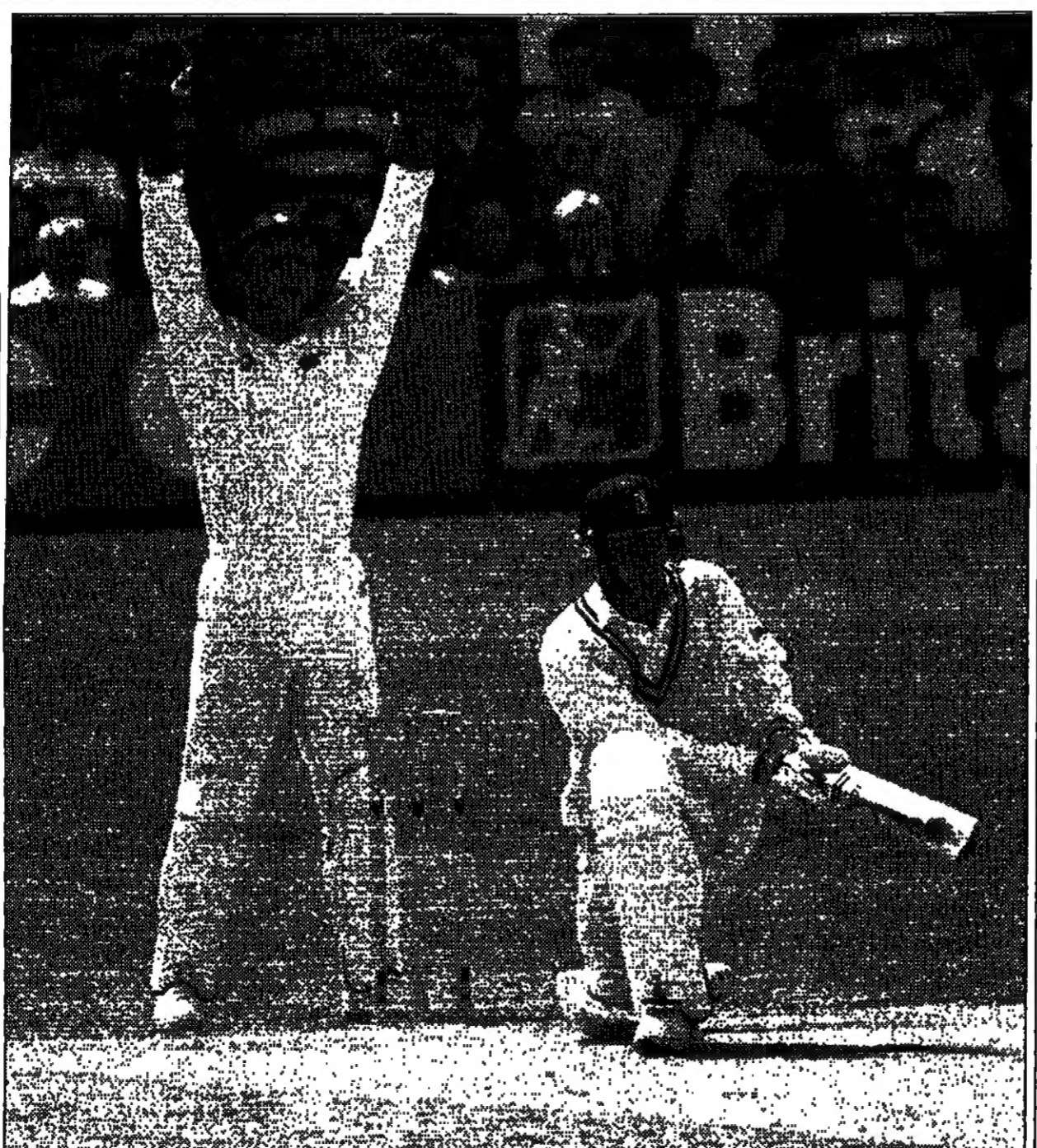
Benson and Hedges Cup, semi-final Northamptonshire v Warwickshire

Walton best of the field

Mike Selvey at Northampton

WHEN the Benson and Hedges Cup came into being 25 years ago, limited-overs cricket was still in its infancy and the quality of out-cricketer came a very distant third to batting and bowling.

four, with Paul Smith and Trevor Penney going well, they seemed on course. Two moments of brilliance from Walton changed the course of the match. Penney had just got into his stride, hitting Tony Penberthy straight into the stands for six, when he clipped John Emburey to deep midwicket and tried for two runs.



Sweeping judgment... Warren appeals, Welch departs, upset at being given out lbw off Emburey

Times have changed, however, and yesterday at the County Ground it was the sheer exuberant quality of Northamptonshire's fielding, led by a virtuoso display from a specialist, Tim Walton, which saw them overcome the competition favourites Warwickshire by 27 runs in a low-scoring semi-final carried over from Tuesday. They will meet Lancashire in the final at Lord's on July 13.

After the bad light and rain that interrupted their momentum on Tuesday evening, Warwickshire resumed yesterday on 91 for three, needing a further 130 runs from just under 27 overs to reach their fifth one-day final in three years, and at 147 for

His bowling, on some juicy pitches, has been awesome at times too, and although this was never a good one-day pitch - too dry, slow, and cracking like a dry riverbed - it was his Yorker which ripped through Dominic Oslter for 33 to end the

promising fourth-wicket stand with Smith that had been worth 82. Although they are a depleted outfit at the moment, Warwickshire will wonder if there are also a few cracks appearing in the fortress. A year ago Northamptonshire would

not have been allowed to recover from 88 for six. Instead Walton, a novice batsman but one sufficiently cued up to pass up the Yorkshire Academy ("it would have been two wasted years") for the opportunity to further his education, exceeded the

expectations of those who thought his batting, though not chicken, certainly erred towards headlessness, and made an unbeaten 70. That alone would have earned him the Gold Award. With his fielding as well he deserved to have gone platinum.

Tennis

Stich happy to shake off hangover

David Irvine at Queen's

PLAYERS who flourish in Paris tend to by-pass the pain miserably at the Stella Artois Championship. Not since John McEnroe in 1984 has a French Open finalist won here. Ivan Lendl and Stefan Edberg were two who fell at the first hurdle.

dropping only six points on serve. "I hope my tennis was better than Croatia's soccer," he joked. "I was unbelievable. If I can play like that at Wimbledon I will be dangerous." Ivanisevic today meets the in-form Edberg, who denied Sandoz Stolle a third successive win against him by defeating the tall Australian 7-6, 6-3. It was only after saving a set point in the tie-break that Edberg established a lead, and in a nervy second set which saw 18 double faults (eight by Stolle) served in six games the Swede's nerve proved the stronger.

in action again only three days after losing his third Grand Slam final, Stich was still trying to work out how he had lost in three sets to Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov after producing one of the matches of his life in the previous round. "I still don't get it. Perhaps someone can help me if they do."

Hopes of having two home players in the third round for the first time were high but Greg Rusedzki capitulated feebly to Todd Woodbridge and Tim Henman failed to build on a good start against Andrei Olhovskiy. Rusedzki's lack of athleticism and an overdependence on a serve that blew hot and cold were painfully evident as the meticulous Australian outwitted him 6-1, 6-2 in 82 minutes. "He took his chances, didn't," said Rusedzki - but there was far more to it than that.

Wood knocked off champion's perch

Richard Jago in Birmingham

IN LESS than an hour's competition since becoming the first home winner of Beckenham for 29 years, Clare Wood was beaten yesterday. From champion to quick oblivion was a confusing experience to suffer in the first round of the DFS Classic here at the Priory Club, particularly as it was inflicted by an opponent not obviously much better than those the British No. 1 overcame last week.

To attempt this she cut down the pace but could rarely find any accuracy, and the consequent pressure already applied with her return of serve forced Wood to rush her volleys or remain at the baseline. The British challenge ended with defeats for Samantha Smith, beaten 7-5, 6-3 by Holland's Miriam Oremans, Karen Cross, who went out 6-2, 6-2 to Maria Strandlund of Sweden, and Megan Miller.

Nicole Arendt, the world No. 100 from the United States, beat her 6-3, 6-1 after Wood, with the first of two successive double faults, missed a point for 4-4 in the first set. Not only were the wheels starting to come off when she dropped serve again at the start of the second set, but a smash buried into the net from only eight feet away to concede yet another break at 1-4 suggested the ace might be working loose as well.

The challenge of the second seed Nathalie Tauziat appeared certain to end when the Frenchwoman, playing her first match on grass since last year's Wimbledon after receiving a bye in the first round, had to save six successive match points from 0-6 in the second-set tie-break. Yet she won 4-6, 7-5, 6-3 against the Thai qualifier Tamarine Tanasugarn. "Her father was complaining about the line decision on the first match point," said Tauziat. "I was laughing at him and after that I played really well. He helped me a lot."

Rugby League

League ready to fast-track Second Division club to bolster Welsh presence

South Wales all set to go Super

Paul Fitzpatrick

SUPER LEAGUE football in south Wales came a step closer yesterday when the sport's governing board of directors agreed in principle to support an application for membership from the South Wales club.

now up to the South Wales directors to prove they can match "pound for pound" the money that would be theirs as members of the Super League. Clive Griffiths, coach to South Wales, and the principality side, has been pleading for the establishment of a Super League club there as the only way rugby league will take a serious hold in south Wales and ensure the continued existence of the Wales side.

Salford's David Young is to return to Cardiff at the end of the season; and sooner or later St Helens' Scott Gibbs will surely go back to his roots. Griffiths feels that a Super League club would solve this problem, as top players will move to a top club but not one in the Second Division.

the English game could be involved in the competition, notably Wigan's Va'auga Tuigamala. London Broncos are reported to have opened negotiations with the 25-year-old Bath and England rugby union forward Steve Ojomoh, and have also been linked with Bath's Ireland wing Simon Geoghegan, who lives and works in London.

Sailing

Problems end non-stop trip

Bob Fisher

SAMANTHA BREWSTER, dogged by technical problems, has abandoned her attempt to sail solo, non-stop around the world the "wrong way". Brewster, aboard the 67ft Heath Insured, was sailing north to Ushant, where she would have had to turn for Santos, Brazil to complete her circumnavigation, when she decided to quit because of problems with her diesel generating engine and a fuel shortage. Defects to her mast at the start of her journey had caused the diversion to Santos. When she returns to Southampton the 28-year-old will have sailed around the world, but not non-stop.

Chess

Karpov wins with black

Leonard Barden

ANATOLY KARPOV scored an impressive win with the black pieces after 45 moves and 5 1/2 hours' play in the fourth game of the Fide world championship at Elista, Kalmykia to take a 2 1/2-1 1/2 lead over the American Gata Kamsky. At the end his pieces dominated the board and Kamsky resigned when faced with the loss of a bishop. Karpov again opened with his favourite Caro-Kann Defence, but his 12th turn improved on his passive bishop move of game two and began strong central counterplay. Kamsky tried to push on with his attack but his position quickly deteriorated. Karpov remained accurate to the end in one of the best strategic games in a world title match.

Sport in brief

Ice Hockey

Wayne Cowley has signed for a German club, leaving the Sheffield Steelers without an experienced netminder. Marty McKay left the British champions recently because Cowley was keeping him out of the side.

Hockey

Britain's teams both take on Olympic champions today, writes Pat Rowley. On the opening day of the four-nations tournaments at Milton Keynes, the men meet Germany for the third time this year and the women play Spain.

Cycling

The Swiss Armin Meier became overall leader in the Tour of Switzerland yesterday with a close second to Italy's Michele Bartoli in the 119-mile second stage. Both were part of a 18-rider group that broke away to chase down the Russian Dmitri Konyshev who had built up an 11-minute lead.

Athletics

Britain's top two will be missing from the team travelling to the European Cup Combined Events meeting in Lage, Germany at the weekend. Alex Kruger, the only British decathlete to have

Cricket

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Sport

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Steadman sticking with Gas

CASTLEFORD'S former Great Britain full-back Graham Steadman has ended speculation about his future by signing a new contract which will keep him at the club until the end of the 1998 season. Steadman, 34, who cost a then-world record £170,000 in 1989, was linked with Huddersfield and Batley.

Lions wrapped up in Cotton, page 13
Henman meets his match, page 15

Euro 96: the sweet sixteen, page 14
The Monster of Detroit, page 15

SportsGuardian

Venables weighs up case for defence

England will shuffle for their game against fired-up Scots

Martin Thorpe

ENGLAND'S thoughts moved from the back page to the back line yesterday as Terry Venables put aside his fight with the media to wrestle with the problems of what team to field against Scotland on Saturday.

Things have moved on in the seven years since these sides last met and though the traditional pride, passion and flag-waving will be conspicuous by their presence at Wembley, other stalwart rituals of this ancient fixture are unlikely to pass the test of time.

Most notably, the world and his coaching manual will almost certainly not be seeing a prehistoric clash of 4-4-2s: the Scots are expected to revert to three at the back, which they eschewed against the Dutch; and England will follow.

This though will present Venables with a huge dilemma, because he will have to face the possibility of dropping Tony Adams, whose patriotism and commitment would be ideal on Saturday.

Clues to the England coach's thinking were few and far between yesterday. Three at the back would release a man to strengthen a midfield that looked thin against the Swiss and also help protect Gascoigne's legs and lungs. It would also provide a mooring for Ince, whose specific role just in front of a three-man defence, with orders to step into the back line when needed, would prevent him going run-about as he did against Switzerland.

The problem lies in personnel. Can Adams be trusted as the central man in a back three? He is lacking form and full fitness, is unused to the role, and already has one booking. Another caution would make him unavailable against Holland should Venables want to revert to a back four.

And if Pearce is to be the left-sided defender, playing Adams would leave the defence with only Gary Neville quicker on the turn than the blimp that flew over England's training session yesterday.

The central defender must surely be Southgate, who plays the system at Aston Villa, looked impressive in the role against Hungary and whose speed would be an asset against such nippy strikers as McCollist or Spence.

That leaves the midfield. Platt will come in if he can shake off the rib injury he aggravated yesterday. If not, Redknapp or even Campbell may get the nod.

Some propose that Gascoigne should be brought on as a pinch-hitter when the Scots are tired and his short fuse is clear of the white heat of the opening half-hour. But that would be a massive blow to a man who thrives on confidence and has already taken so much stick. Venables is unlikely to put him through that.

The right-footed McManus continues to pose a problem on the left. So Venables could switch his beloved Anderson and bring in Stone on the right, where his willingness to track back would also help against the left-sided threat of Collins. McManus could then come on in the centre of midfield, where he is more comfortable, to replace Gazza should he tire again.

Breaking down the Scots will be England's big problem, as the Dutch found out, as Bryan Robson talked yesterday of England's need to pace their game better than they did against the Swiss and also not give the ball away so easily.

A veteran of nine Anglo-Scots encounters as a player, England's assistant coach said: "It is usually the team that keeps composed and uses their heads and doesn't go at a 100 miles an hour that wins these games."

This may prove difficult against the revived Scots, but at least England know that, if this proves the pattern, their opponents should be tired by the second half too.



Slips shot... Fairbrother, Lancashire's second-top scorer, deflects Stimp for four as Blakey twirls in vain. MICHAEL STEELE

Hegg's heroics have final word

David Hopps at Old Trafford

EVERYBODY kept saying it would have made a great final, and so it would. It certainly developed into one of the greatest Roses finishes of any era, as Lancashire squeezed into the Benson and Hedges Cup final — their fifth in seven years — from the last ball with one wicket intact.

Lancashire's last pair, Peter Martin and Glen Chapple, pounded the last two runs like dutiful cart-horses trapped in a Penzance bog, but Martin's cleave at Craig White had careered wide enough of Michael Vaughan on the cover boundary for them to make safe ground. Facing his two previous balls, Martin had swished late air. "There were always two runs, but I was treading water," he said. "It must have been the tension. For me, the international cricket I've played, I've never known anything that nerve-racking."

Yorkshire will dwell upon a purposeful and disciplined display and wonder how victory eluded them. They need not search for logic, just give recognition to the exceptional hitting by Warren Hegg, whose 81 from 62 balls confirmed Lancashire as the country's most formidable one-day side; they bat down to the groundsman's cart, which even now is probably donning pads and wandering off for a net in preparation for the Lord's final on July 13 against Northamptonshire, who beat Warwickshire by 37 runs.

If there was one turning point, it came with Lancashire 74 short with seven overs remaining and Richard Stemp reintroduced for the last of his 10-over allotment. It cost 18, both Yates and Hegg launching him for straight sixes.

White suffered similarly. Hegg lashing sixes over long-off and cover as successive overs cost 30. "I play a bit of golf," said Hegg, a 10-handicapper, explaining that the first blow had a little back-spin and that the second featured his "horrible slice". Yorkshire had set up the day with a B&H record sixth-wicket stand of 167 in

27 overs between Bevan (85 not out from 75 balls) and Blakey (80 not out from 94). Bevan batted with a wild conviction while Blakey, more lugubrious, responded inventively, and what the pair had begun on Tuesday they completed emphatically by taking 52 from the four residual overs. Lancashire, set 251, were looking at an even game for the first time. Yorkshire kept up their momentum as Gough reminded the England captain of his existence, having Atherton caught at slip in the first over. Just as impressively, Gough maintained an immaculate line. Watkinson's promotion to opener has been a response to the stationary attacking fields in the first 15 overs, but it is a brave man who pinch-hits in a Roses semi-final and he had hardly risked a shot in nine overs

Old Trafford Lancashire won by one wicket.
YORKSHIRE First innings (overnight 198-5)
M G Bevan not out 85
R J Blakey not out 80
Extras (bbs, wd) 9
Total (for 5, 30 overs) 280
Fall of wickets: 39, 58, 78, 97, 161, 174
2nd innings (for 5, 30 overs)
Batters: D J Constant and K E Palmer
Bowling: Gough 10-1-30-2, Silverwood 10-2-40-2, Hartley 10-1-47-0, White 10-1-74-1, Stemp 10-0-54-7.
Lancashire First innings
M A Atherton c Byas b Gough 40
N J Speak run out 34
S Dwaney c Gough b Silverwood 29
R H Fairbrother run out 29
G D Lloyd c Blakey b Silverwood 9
T W Kemp b White 8
I D Austin c B Gough 5
G Yates run out 2
G Chapple not out 2
P J Martin not out 2
Extras (bbs, wd) 10
Total (for 9, 30 overs) 221
Fall of wickets: 2, 21, 36, 78, 97, 161, 174
2nd innings (for 5, 30 overs)
Batters: D J Constant and K E Palmer
Bowling: Gough 10-1-30-2, Silverwood 10-2-40-2, Hartley 10-1-47-0, White 10-1-74-1, Stemp 10-0-54-7.

Judgment day for the boss from hell



Jonathan Freedland

SHE'S one of the richest women in the United States but she hasn't bought new clothes in nine years. She's the owner of a major-league baseball team but she has never learned the rules of the game. She lives in the land of political correctness but she refers to highly paid black players as "million-dollar niggers". She is praised by Hitler and keeps a swastika armband in a drawer at home.

She is Marge Schott, the idiosyncratic owner of the Cincinnati Reds. At the age of 67 she hasn't met an ethnic group she hasn't disliked, she is an unrepentant sexist and the boss from Hell — tapping her players' phone calls, opening their post and banning free toilet paper as an unnecessary luxury. She is a cross between Scrooge, J Edgar Hoover and Eva Braun, and is probably the most loathed figure in American sport.

Yesterday was judgment day for old Marge. The 10-man executive council that runs the major leagues ended a week's deliberations and ruled that she had engaged in conduct detrimental to the game. The sentence was widely expected to be a formal suspension from the game and — since she cannot be forced to sell up — a demand that she hand over management of the Reds to someone else.

The baseball commissioner had wanted Marge out for years, her mouth a living PR disaster for a game with no shortage of image problems. They suspended her once before, for a year, after she told a TV interviewer in 1993 that the swastika was "not a symbol of evil to me". For that she sent her on a compulsory course in "sensitivity training". It didn't quite do the trick.

Last month she entertained an interviewer from Sports Illustrated magazine with a Fu-Manchu-style impersonation of the Japanese prime minister, whom she had met on a baseball goodwill mission, and also by railing against Asian-Americans, some of the game's most enthusiastic fans.

"I don't like [it] when they come here, honey, and stay so long and then outdo our kids," she said. "That's not right."

Always proud of her German heritage, she then turned to one of history's misunderstood men, Adolf Hitler. "He was okay at the beginning. He rebuilt all the roads, honey. He just went too far."

So did Marge. That was the last straw for the men who run baseball, who hauled her before them last week. Staff at the Reds, the players, the fans, all watched anxiously — praying she'd get the boot. "I think she is the single worst person I've ever known," said one Reds veteran fondly. "Spiteful, mean-spirited and evil."

She is so mean, she demands personal approval of every cheque over \$50 (\$33). She rummages through rubbish bags, ensuring that discarded paper has been used on both sides. She turns off computers to save electricity, wiping out data as she goes. She refuses to hire cleaners, so management duties at the Reds include maintaining the toilets.

When her team, despite everything, won the World Series in 1990 she wouldn't shell out for a celebration. The victorious players had to pop out and come back with a few hamburgers.

Some say Marge is a figure of pathos. She is the fifth of five daughters; her father wanted a boy and called her Butch. The widow of an apparently loveless marriage, she now lives alone in a 40-room mansion with only her 22 St Bernards for company.

At games she can be spotted alone in her luxury box waiting for the employee charged with walking her favourite dog, named (inevitably) Schottzie, to return and report. "Tinkle or poo?" she asks after each trip.

Those who know say Marge can only sleep at night after she's knocked back a cocktail of vodka and sedatives.

UT, pathos or no, now everyone wants her out. "This is our national pastime," said Len Coleman, the National League's president. "We have the responsibility of looking up, and when we're talking about ethnicity that has to be one of tolerance."

Coleman is right. Baseball is the national pastime, although not perhaps in the way he meant. Whatever is going on in the United States can usually be found in baseball. Businessmen are accused of greed and excessive pay, so are baseball's owners and players. The nation is an ethnic mix, trying to get along, so is baseball.

And the country is still home to racism and bigotry and so, one fears, is baseball. With or without Marge Schott.

There's no disguising problem toenails

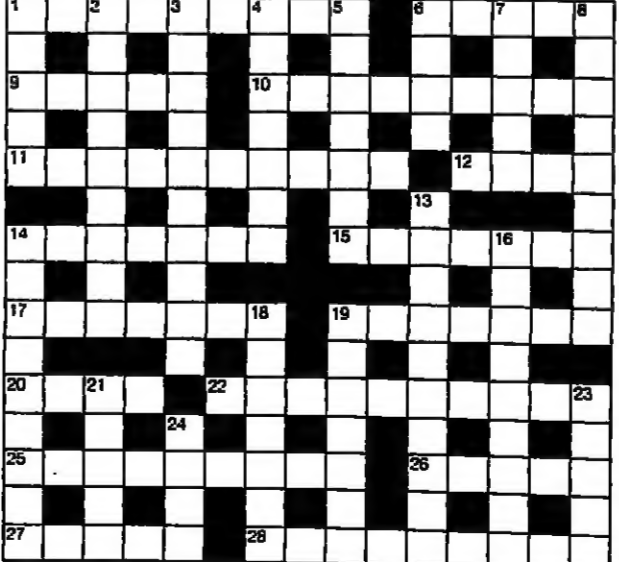


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All around me most spectators were silent. Two French rocket engineers swore: "Merde, merde, mærdel!" Paul Murdin

Guardian Crossword No 20,678

Set by Crispa



- Across
1 Disagreeing about a point made tongue-in-cheek (9)
6 Drop a music man (5)
9 The Pansian and the waters of forgetfulness (5)
10 Tots caper about. She looks on (9)
11 After cut-back repeats blunder, causing anger (10)
12 Support — for money (4)
14 A standstill could render one thousand out of date (7)
15 Opportunity the novice found in the church (7)
17 Enduring without purpose (7)
19 Serving men dealing with remains (7)
20 Abandoned, which isn't right (4)
22 Many a guy holding on can appear uncertain (10)
25 Militant leaders (9)
Down
1 Invalid — a self-made invalid (5)
2 A worker turned in beaten and had a little sleep (9)
3 He's warned there may be a charge for effecting an entry (10)
4 Keep taking notice (7)
5 A person most reluctant to give credit (7)
6 Loudly scoffed "It was bound to happen" (4)
7 Following? Dead right! (5)
8 The citadel's made a cut — oil's problematic (9)
13 Baiting heavyweights from a Northern town (10)
14 Impractical individuals producing fancy catalogues (9)

CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,677
16 A nice long break can be so pleasant (9)
18 Implements inadequate accommodation in seagoing craft (7)
19 Beastly fighting man finding it dull before a stick-up (7)
21 Certain measures taken about a number in prison (5)
23 Teach how to serve trout properly (5)
24 Some ultra-patriotic little group (4)

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Friday June 14 1996
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Reviews
Books: Hugh Grant
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That's scorns Major with cash g
Dear...
L...
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Austin
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